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A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY

BY

JOHN R. SPEARS

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Published February, 1908

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PREFACE

In preparing this volume the writer has been animated by a desire to tell, in one convenient volume, that might be sold at a moderate price, the whole story of our navy—to describe all the important naval battles, and to show how the nation has been affected at certain times by the work of its naval ships, and at other times by the want of such a force.

All battles that have had any influence upon the wars in which the nation has been engaged, or upon the evolution of ships of war, or upon the character of our naval men, or of the nation, have been deemed important herein. Any consideration of the facts shows that our sailors were animated, in most of their battles, by the knowledge that they were fighting for the very life of the nation, and it is therefore not too much to say that a description of such a fight must be a hero story, however told. Frankly, it was in the belief that every history of our navy claims attention first of all as a hero story that this one was written.

But while most of the space has been devoted to the battles, especial consideration has been given to the facts and conditions that have, from time to time, created public opinion in favor of, or against, the employment of a navy. In this point of view the building of the frigates early in the War of the Revolution, and the utter collapse of the young navy before the end of that war, have a new interest. Of still greater interest is the story of the navy building in the

days when we paid tribute to African princes, and, while singing "Hail, ye heroes, heaven-born band," hesitated to send our warships to sea for the protection of our merchantmen lest the swarming pirates be thereby made "more acrimonious than ever"!

Still another story of the kind is that of the efforts to use "peaceable coercion" to compel the warring nations of Europe to treat us justly. The facts in that matter should be of particular interest to all who honestly believe that a strong navy incites a nation to go to war. For during a period of eleven years before the War of 1812 the American people strove with all their might to get on without a navy —with the result that they suffered every indignity, with enormous and even incalculable losses of property, and then were compelled to fight at last. That the influence of the American people has always been exerted for the promotion of peace is a statement that need not be supported by evidence, and that this influence has been effective in proportion to the strength of our navy is one of the propositions which it is hoped has been made good in this volume.

The work of our navy in the evolution of warships, though a matter of mechanics, is by no means devoid of popular interest. Thus the battle of the *Constitution* and the *Guerrière*, though it has been called elsewhere a mere naval duel, wrought a mighty change in the frigates of the world at the same time that it saved the American people from disasters that should never be forgotten. The battle of the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac* was of similar interest, for, in addition to its influence upon the war for the preservation of the Union, it led to the evolution of the modern battleship. And as for the battleship, there are some who believe that it has been worth its cost aside from its political influence—as shall appear.

Finally, a consideration of the effect of our naval battles upon character is a matter that brings us back again to

the hero stories, and makes such stories worth the telling. It is worth while, is it not, to recall that John Paul Jones said while on a sinking ship, "I have not yet begun to fight," and that Commodore Perry, when going out to the battle of Lake Erie, said, "To windward or to leeward, they shall fight to-day"? Though their names are nowhere recorded, we are not likely to forget the work of the men who, during the Civil War, deliberately met death in the "davids" at Charleston. The story of the cable-cutters of the War with Spain is inspiring far inland from the littoral. Indeed, this volume might very well have been dedicated to all who face the enemy—*every enemy*—with the spirit of the fighting men of our navy.

J. R. S.

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A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY

CHAPTER I

ORGANIZING THE FIRST NAVY

THE destruction of the British war schooner *Gaspé* by a band of patriots under the lead of Captain Abraham Whipple, near Providence, R. I., before daylight in the morning of June 10, 1772, was the first stroke afloat for American liberty. The *Gaspé*, acting as a revenue cutter, had been destroying the commerce of the colony.

The capture of the British war schooner *Margaretta*, off Machias, Me., on June 12, 1775, by patriots under Jeremiah O'Brien (they had been inspired by the story of Lexington), was the next, and it led to the destruction of Falmouth (now called Portland), Me., on October 18, 1775.

In the meantime the Rhode Island Assembly, moved, perhaps, by the men who had been connected with the *Gaspé* affair, had unanimously declared "that the building and equipping of an American fleet as soon as possible" would "greatly and essentially conduce to the preservation of the liberty" of the colonies. When this resolution came before the Congress of the Colonies, then in session at Philadelphia, although Washington had already been authorized to borrow armed ships from Massachusetts to capture supplies from the British transports, it was ridiculed as "the maddest idea in the world," and it was

with difficulty that "its friends procured the consideration of the question to be left open a little while." (John Adams.) On October 13, however, the navy builders got these resolutions adopted:

"That a swift-sailing vessel, to carry ten carriage guns, and a proportionable number of swivels, with eighty men, be fitted, with all possible despatch, for a cruise of three months, and that the commander be instructed to cruise eastward for intercepting such transports as may be laden with warlike stores and other supplies for our enemies.

"That a committee of three be appointed . . . to fit out the vessel.

"That another vessel be fitted out for the same purpose."

On October 30 the subject of a navy came up again. It was agreed that the second ship already ordered should carry fourteen guns, and then two more ships were ordered, one of which was to carry twenty guns and the other "not exceeding thirty-six." The committee provided for in the resolutions of the 13th included Deane, Langdon and Gadsden. To these were now added Hopkins, Hewes, R. H. Lee and John Adams. Then, on November 1, "a letter from General Washington by express, with an account of the burning of Falmouth, was read." Vice-Admiral Graves had thought to frighten the colonists into submission by burning Falmouth, but the Congress immediately ordered copies of Washington's letter sent to all the colonies, and then adopted resolutions saying that it had been the deliberate intent of the British to disperse "at a late season of the year hundreds of helpless women and children, with a savage hope that those may perish under the approaching rigor of the season who may chance to escape destruction from fire and sword." And it was then declared that "these colonies . . . have determined to prevent as much as possible a repetition thereof, and

to procure some reparation for the same, by fitting out armed vessels and ships of force." To this end the sum of $100,000 was immediately (November 2) appropriated.

Thereafter the Congress proceeded rapidly with the work of providing "an American fleet." On November 25 and 28 "Rules for the Regulation of the Navy of the United Colonies" were considered and adopted, and in this title the Congress used for the first time the term "Navy of the United Colonies." A remarkably large space in these rules is given to the provision of food, and to the care of the sick and wounded and to the property rights of the blue-jackets. And it was not for nothing that those grave legislators were concerned to provide that "a proportion of canvas for pudding bags, after the rate of one ell for every sixteen men" should be served out at proper intervals.

In the meantime Washington had fitted out the Massachusetts cruiser *Lee*, Captain John Manly, on October 5. She carried "a flag with a white ground, a tree in the middle, the motto 'Appeal to Heaven!'" She was the first vessel to sail under the central authority, but her commission and that of Manly were signed by Washington, not by Congress. Moreover, she was not the property of the United Colonies. Her cruise proved exceedingly fortunate, for she captured the large transport *Nancy*, that had been loaded with material for the British army at Boston, and on her return to port "such universal joy ran through the whole camp as if each one grasped victory in his own hands."

The joy spread to the hall of the Congress. The messenger sent by Washington to carry the news arrived at Philadelphia at a moment when the Congress was in secret session, considering how to secure the supplies needed to keep Washington's army together. When he knocked at the hall door the delegates ordered him to wait, but he was

insistent and they let him in. They listened with breathless interest while he told his story, and then John Adams arose and said with the solemnity of a prophet:

"We must succeed—Providence is with us—we must succeed!"

The delegates were at last awakened to an appreciation of what Ruskin first called sea power, and they resolved:

"That a committee be appointed to devise ways and means for furnishing these colonies with a naval armament, *and report with all convenient speed.*"

The committee appointed for this purpose (it was the second naval committee of the Congress) included Bartlett, Samuel Adams, Hopkins, Deane, Lewis, Crane, Robert Morris, Read, Paca, R. H. Lee, Hewes and Gadsden. They made haste, as directed, and in two days (on December 13, 1775) reported:

"That five ships of thirty-two guns, five of twenty-eight guns, three of twenty-four guns, making in the whole thirteen, can be fitted for the sea probably by the last of March next (1776).

"That the cost of these ships, so fitted, will not be more than 66,666⅔ dollars each, on the average.

"That the materials for fitting them may all be furnished in these colonies except the articles of canvas and gun powder."

The Congress was advised to "direct the most speedy means of importing" the two articles needed—7,500 pieces of canvas and 100 barrels of powder—and it was thereupon resolved "That a committee be appointed with full powers to carry this advice into execution with all possible expedition."

This, the third, naval committee included Bartlett, Hancock, Hopkins, Deane, Lewis, Crane, Robert Morris, Read, Chase, R. H. Lee, Hewes, Gadsden, and Houston.

Chase, of Maryland, who had led in the ridicule of the

idea of "an American fleet," was now on a committee to aid in the fitting out of ships built for war purposes. On December 16 the sum of $500,000 was voted to pay for these warships.

In the meantime the original naval committee (on which Deane was first named), appointed to fit out four armed ships, had selected four merchantmen from among those laid up in the Delaware, as follows:

Two ships (large vessels rigged with three masts on which yards were crossed), one of which was named the *Alfred*, after Alfred the Great, and the other the *Columbus*, after the great explorer; two brigs, one of which was called the *Andrew Doria*, after one of the heroes of the battle of Lepanto, and the other the *Cabot*, after Sebastian Cabot, the explorer who had sailed under the British flag. The two ships were rated as 24-gun frigates, but the *Alfred* carried thirty guns at that time, and the *Columbus* twenty-eight. The main deck battery on each was probably composed chiefly of 9-pounders, but there is some reason for supposing that a few 12-pounders were procured. (Force, IV, 964). On poop and forecastle they carried 6-pounders. European frigates of that day usually carried 12-pounders on the main deck with 9-pounders on poop and forecastle. The *Doria* carried sixteen and the *Cabot* fourteen 4-pounders.

On December 19, these vessels being "nearly ready to sail," the Congress borrowed four tons of powder and 400 muskets of the Pennsylvania committee of safety. And now that they were fitted out the Congress, on December 22, 1775, formally organized the first "American fleet" by ordering that commissions be granted to the following officers who had been selected by the committee: Esek Hopkins, Esq., Commander-in-Chief of the fleet; Dudley Saltonstall, Captain of the *Alfred;* Abraham Whipple, Captain of the *Columbus;* Nicholas Biddle, Captain

of the *Andrew Doria;* John Burroughs Hopkins, Captain of the *Cabot.* Thirteen lieutenants were also appointed, the first of whom was John Paul Jones.

In addition to the vessels thus far named the naval committee had purchased an 8-gun schooner—the *Fly*—used as a despatch boat, and they had secured and commissioned at Baltimore two other vessels, the sloop *Hornet,* of ten guns, and the schooner *Wasp,* of eight.

Thus the first naval committee appointed had procured eight armed vessels for the use of the United Colonies. These were not all the armed vessels in the service; on November 16 the Congress had ordered "that two swift-sailing vessels be provided for packets." Robert Morris was directed to secure them, with Lynch and Franklin to aid him. By this committee two swift brigs were fitted out. One was named the *Lexington* and Captain John Barry, an Irish-American, noted in the annals of the navy, was appointed to command her. The other was named the *Reprisal* and Captain Lambert Wickes was her master. Barry and Wickes were commissioned on December 7, 1775, but their brigs were reserved for other uses when the first "American fleet" was organized.

From first to last the salt-water navy of the Revolution included forty-seven vessels—ships, brigs, schooners and sloops. The first navy ships, properly so-called, were the thirteen frigates ordered on December 13, 1775. These ships were armed with 12-pounders, at best, on the gun deck, and with 9-pounders, 6-pounders or smaller yet, on poop and forecastle. In 1777 a frigate was built at Amsterdam and called the *Indien.* She carried thirty 36-pounders and fourteen 9-pounders and was therefore a most formidable vessel of her class for that day. The *Alliance,* built at Salisbury, Mass., during that year, was perhaps the best frigate built at home during the war. She carried at first twenty-six 12-pounders and ten smaller

guns. Later she carried twenty-eight 18-pounders and twelve 9-pounders. In this year, moreover, two other frigates of thirty-two guns, one of twenty-eight, a sloop-of-war of twenty guns and two of eighteen were built. In 1778 only one vessel, a sloop-of-war, was added to the navy. It was in this year that the French loaned a squadron to John Paul Jones. Finally, in 1782, a line-of-battle ship named *America* was built at Portsmouth, N. H. That was the end of the building, but several prizes captured from the British were taken into the service.

Of the ships thus provided, the frigate *Randolph*, the sloop *Ranger* and the converted merchantman *Bonhomme Richard* did the work of most interest to this history, but there was one fight on fresh water that had a great influence on the course of the war.

Of the work of the squadron organized under Esek Hopkins it need only be said that it went to the Bahamas, captured some stores and came back. Then it was disbanded and the vessels were sent hunting British merchantmen with more or less success, but they did nothing of vital importance in the war.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST BATTLE OF LAKE CHAMPLAIN

As the reader remembers, an American army invaded Canada in September, 1775, and during the subsequent winter they held Governor Guy Carleton cooped up in Quebec. The arrival of a British fleet with an army of 13,357 men (including many Hessians) drove the Americans back. They reached Crown Point on July 3. The British, with Governor Carleton in command, followed, for "the design was," says the "Remembrancer," that this army and that of General Howe, then in New York, "should join about Albany and thereby cut off all communication between the northern and southern colonies."

But when Carleton reached St. John's, a post standing at the foot of ship navigation of the lake, he found there was no road on either side of the lake, and that the lake route of travel was held by the Americans because General Arnold had taken and armed such vessels as he had found afloat there the year before. It was therefore necessary for the British to construct a fleet sufficiently powerful to sweep the lake.

The work of building the warships was assigned to Captain Charles Douglass, R.N., and the fact that he was able to set afloat a full-rigged ship carrying eighteen 12-pounders after only twenty-eight days of labor, indicates that the facilities were satisfactory. The ship was named *Inflexible*. Two schooners, a huge scow called a radeau, another large scow that was called a gondola and was propelled by sails, at least twenty gunboats and four long

boats from the fleet were also provided and armed for the occasion.

To meet the powerful British fleet Arnold was able to muster a sloop, two little schooners, eight gondolas and four galleys. One of the galleys (the *Congress*) was chosen by Arnold for his flagship because it was on the whole the most efficient vessel he had. This galley was built on "the Philadelphia model"—it was about fifty feet long on the keel by thirteen wide and four and one-half deep. It could bring into action at best an 18-pounder, a 12 and two 6-pounders. In short, the British ships engaged in the first day's battle could throw 546 pounds of shot to the American's 265. They probably had two inches of wood in their walls to one inch in the American. For crews they had 697 picked officers and men from the British fleet, beside an unstated but large number of trained artillerymen from the army (Pausch's "Journal," p. 84), and "a large detachment of savages under Major [Thomas] Carleton." [Lieutenant Hadden's 'Journal,' p. 19]. Moreover, there were twenty-four transports in the British fleet from which supplies of men and ammunition could be drawn.

To man his flotilla Arnold needed 936 men, but he had only 700, and these were made up for the most part of landsmen, the "refuse of the army."

These details seem necessary in connection with this, the first squadron battle fought by Americans, in order to set forth the disparity between the two sides, for by any just comparison the British were three times as powerful as the Americans.

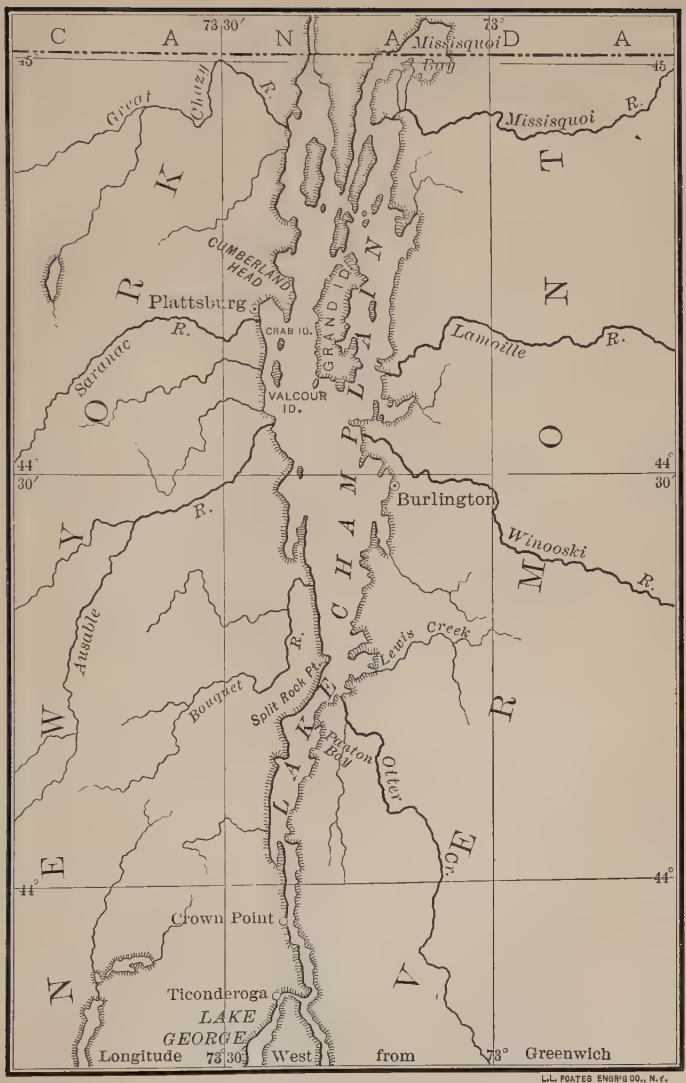
In spite of this disparity, Arnold sailed down the lake to get as near the enemy as possible, and with a clear perception of what the enemy must do he took a position behind Valcour Island. Having square sails the British were sure to come with a fair (north) wind. Because the water was shoal at the north end of his channel Arnold was

well assured that they would pass his island and then beat up to attack him, and in such a narrow channel they could not bring their full force to attack him in line.

On October 11, 1776, the wind served and the enemy came snoring along with a full press of canvas and all eyes searching the eastern shores where Arnold was supposed to be in hiding. So they passed well alee of Valcour before they saw the American flotilla.

At the first alarm the ship and schooners tacked around to beat slowly up into the narrow channel, but the gunboats cut close around the south end of the island. For the moment these gunboats were unsupported by the larger vessels, and Arnold with his four galleys and the schooner *Royal Savage* made a dash at them. The fighting began at eleven o'clock. The *Royal Savage* was driven ashore on Valcour Island and Arnold was compelled to return to his original position where "at half-past twelve, the engagement became general and very warm. Some of the enemy's ships and all their gondolas beat and rowed up within musket shot of us." The schooner *Carleton* anchored there, and with springs on her cable trained her broadside on Arnold's galley. The shot fired point-blank struck home at every broadside, while the Indians that were with the British took post in the woods at each end of the American line, where they poured in a galling fire.

At his first view of the enemy Arnold had seen that he could not win against such odds, but, aiming the guns on the *Congress*, with his own hands he fought as one who sees victory within his grasp. The schooner *Carleton* was silenced and the boats that were held in reserve towed her out of range. The *Maria* came up to take her place and was in turn driven off. Last of all came the *Inflexible*, a ship fit to sweep the lake, but, as Hessian Pausch says, "the *Inflexible* took her place only to retreat as the others had done." One galley, the *Philadelphia*, was now in-



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SCENE OF ARNOLD'S BATTLE, OCTOBER 11, 1776, AND OF MACDONOUGH'S VICTORY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1814.

jured so that, as Pausch says, she "began to careen over on one side, *but in spite of this* [*she*] *continued her fire.*" ("Journal," p. 83.)

"They continued a very hot fire with round and grapeshot until five o'clock," wrote Arnold, "when they thought proper to retire to about six or seven hundred yards and continue the fire until dark." To this Lieutenant Hadden, of the Royal Artillery adds in his "Journal": "It was found that the boats' advantage was not to come nearer than about 700 yards, as whenever they approached nearer they were greatly annoyed by grapeshot."

In fact, one British boat that was driven by its Hessian commander, Lieutenant Dufais, to a closer range, was blown up. "The cannon of the Rebels were well served," says Pausch, "for, as I saw afterwards, our ships were pretty well mended and patched up with boards and stoppers."

In numbers and in concentration of gun power the British had three times the force of the Americans, but Arnold, with his scanty crews, fought them to a standstill. He had fought to delay the enemy, and he had succeeded, but he could not hope for victory over such a force, and that night when the usual fog spread over the lake, he slipped through the British line and pulled away toward Ticonderoga, sinking two of the gondolas as he went because they were beyond saving, and making such repairs as he could to the others. The British followed, and on the 13th they overhauled the remnant of the American flotilla near Split Rock Point. The ship and the two schooners were in the lead with the radeau and the big sailing gondola within range. The gunboats were not far behind, but they were more modest this time, as Hadden says. At least two of them came into the fight, however. Arnold was to meet seven of the best of the British fleet, although the ship alone, or even the radeau, was now far

more than a match for his shattered flotilla. Moreover, at the first broadside of the enemy, the galley *Washington* was so badly cut up that she had to surrender.

But to surrender in time of battle was not in the heart of Benedict Arnold. In spite of overwhelming odds—undaunted by the fire of the whole British fleet that was soon concentrated on his galley—Arnold fought them off for four hours. And even then, when the enemy had closed in around him so that escape was impossible; when a third of his crew had been shot down and his galley was a wreck barely able to float, he would not surrender. Directing the gondola captains who had stood by him to beach their vessels, he covered them as best he could as they made for the shore, and then, after driving his galley upon the rocks, he kept his guns working until all were set on fire. He remained on board his own vessel until the flames were climbing the rigging "lest the enemy should get possession and strike his flag, which was kept flying to the last."

The American flotilla was destroyed, but the sacrifice was not in vain. No fight like that was ever made in vain. It was our battle of Bunker Hill afloat. Carleton sailed on until he came in view of Ticonderoga, but there he stopped. He had come intending to attack the American works at that point, but as Dodsley's "Annual Register" (London) says in reporting the affair, he had seen "the countenance of the enemy," and this with "other cogent reasons prevented this design from taking place."

By fighting on against overwhelming odds—by fighting blindly until the last gasp—the American flotilla turned back the invader, and thus made straight the way that led to the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratŏga.

CHAPTER III

WITH THE RANGER AND THE BONHOMME RICHARD

With his name at the head of the register of lieutenants, John Paul Jones was made executive officer of the *Alfred* and he sailed with her to the Bahamas. Of his work after her return, and while in command of two other warships, nothing need be said here because, while it was well done, it had no influence on the war that is worth mention.

On June 14, 1777, by resolution of the Congress, Jones was ordered to take command of the sloop-of-war *Ranger*, then building at Portsmouth, N. H., and take her to Europe. A coincidence that no biographer has failed to mention is found in the fact that on the same day the Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes, "a new constellation," as the flag of the United States.

Hastening to Portsmouth, Jones hoisted on the *Ranger* the new flag and he claimed that she was the first ship so honored. Then with scanty, and in the matter of sails, unfit materials, he fitted her out, armed her with eighteen 6-pounders, "all three diameters of the bore too short," and on November 1, 1777, he sailed for France bearing despatches to the American envoys in Paris, and the news of the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga, which was to induce the French Government to acknowledge the independence of the United States.

In France, where he arrived on December 2, Jones strove to get command of a small squadron with which to cruise on the British coasts, "to surprise their defenceless places; and thereby divert their attention, *and draw it from our*

coasts." Being unable to secure a squadron, he fitted out the *Ranger* for the work he had proposed. In her he received, February 14, 1778, the first foreign salute ever given to the new flag. Then, on April 10, he sailed from Brest for the British coasts. Arriving off Whitehaven at midnight on the 22d Jones landed, fired one ship in the harbor and frightened the wits out of half of the United Kingdom. He then sailed to the Isle of St. Mary, where he landed a force of men and surrounded the house of the Earl of Selkirk. It was the avowed object of this landing to carry away the earl, "and to have detained him until, through his means, a general and fair exchange of prisoners, as well in Europe as in America, had been effected."

Finding that the earl was not at home "some officers," says Jones, observed that "in America no delicacy was shown by the English who took away all sorts of moveable property, setting fire not only to towns and to the houses of the rich, but not even sparing the wretched hamlets and milch cows of the poor and helpless at the approach of an inclement winter." Remembering these facts of British outrage the officers urged Jones to carry away at least the silverware of the earl, and he permitted them to do so, although he did not fully approve the act.

The plate carried away was worth about £500. When it was sold as good prize in France Jones bought it with his own money, and at an expense of £1000 all told, returned it to the earl. The earl, to show how much he appreciated this sacrifice, wrote to Jones saying: "I have mentioned it to many people of fashion."

It appears that the earl never mentioned the return of the plate to any of the British naval historians; at any rate not one of them mentions the fact that it was returned.

Sailing north, Jones met the British sloop-of-war *Drake*, Captain G. Burden, off Belfast Lough.

It is a curious fact, illustrative of the naval conditions

prevailing during the Revolution that, while waiting for the *Drake* to come within range, the executive officer of the *Ranger* was telling the men before the mast that "being American citizens, fighting for liberty, the voice of the people should be taken before the captain's orders should be obeyed." "The people" were on the point of rising in open mutiny, and Jones's life was in real danger, when the approach of a boat from the *Drake,* that had come out for a look at the *Ranger,* showed that a battle was at hand, no matter what the "vote" might decide, and "the people" concluded to fight under Jones.

Reaching off shore until there was plenty of room on deep water for a battle the *Ranger* wore around on the port bow of the *Drake* and opened the battle with a broadside. Squaring away, the *Drake* replied and thereafter, for an hour and four minutes, the two ships drove along, firing as rapidly as the two crews could handle their guns. It was as fair a fight as is known to history, for, while the *Drake* had twenty guns (6-pounders, like the *Ranger's*), and was manned by 151 regularly enlisted men besides an unstated number of volunteers, where the *Ranger* carried only 123 (or possibly 126), the Americans had been taught to shoot—they were good New England Yankees. The *Ranger* remained almost unharmed, while the *Drake* lost three yards, her masts were all wounded and her hull was "very much galled." And just as the sun was sinking behind the Irish hills her captain fell mortally wounded. The first lieutenant also having been mortally hurt, her crew called for quarter. The *Ranger* lost three killed and five wounded and the *Drake* about forty-two killed and wounded.

Small as were these two vessels the capture of the *Drake* made a great stir throughout Europe, because at that time no officer on the Continent thought it possible to win in a sea fight with the British where the forces were

equal. Unhappily, however, Jones's success created envy and jealousy as well as admiration. When the French minister of marine would have put him in command of a squadron the opposition of French officers prevented his doing so, and Jones was kept waiting for months for the fulfilment of promises that never could be fulfilled.

On February 4, 1779, Jones was ordered to an old East Indianman lying at L'Orient. She was rotten and slow but she would float and carry guns, and he began to fit her out. As built, this ship was fitted to carry guns on her main deck with a few more on poop and forecastle. To increase her gun power Jones cut six new ports, on each side, on a deck below the main. He thought to instal there twelve 18-pounders but he could obtain only condemned guns, and he, therefore, mounted three of the best of them on each side. On the main deck he mounted twenty-eight "indifferent 12-pounders," or fourteen on a side. Four 9-pounders were mounted on the poop and as many on the forecastle. When fitted out this ship, which Jones renamed the *Bonhomme Richard*, carried twenty-one guns on each side. A crew was procured "from among the English prisoners, and by enlisting raw French peasants as volunteers. Captain Jones had not more than thirty Americans among the crew" when he hoisted the flag.

A number of other vessels were then ordered to join her and form a squadron. The American frigate *Alliance* had come to Europe under a Frenchman named Pierre Landais, a man who, after having been driven from the French navy for cause, went to America and obtained a commission by fraud. The *Alliance*, carrying thirty-six guns, was ordered to join Jones. The other ships of the squadron were the French frigate *Pallas*, of thirty-two 8-pounders, the brig *Vengence*, of twelve 3-pounders, and the cutter *Cerf* of eighteen similar guns. The five, considered as a

war squadron, compared very well with the *Bonhomme Richard,* considered as a warship.

To add to his troubles Jones was compelled to sign an agreement that "made of the squadron a confederacy rather than a military unit. . . . Every subordinate captain had ground for questioning his particular orders." (Mahan).

"There was neither secrecy nor subordination," as Jones wrote, but his "reputation being at stake," he "put all to the hazard." Then came one stroke of good luck. The British made an exchange of prisoners by which 199 American seamen were released, and of these Jones shipped more than 100. Every man of them was needed in the work that followed. He also secured Lieut. Richard Dale, who had escaped from the British prison by walking out dressed in a British uniform obtained by stealth.

The squadron sailed from Groix Roads, outside of L'Orient, on August 14, 1779. On the 23d of the following month, while the *Bonhomme Richard*, the *Alliance*, the *Pallas* and the *Vengence* were off Flamborough Head, on the east coast of England, to which point Jones had come to cut off the Newcastle coal trade, the British Baltic fleet, laden with ship stores, appeared, coming with a fair breeze from the north. At that the *Vengence* was ordered out of danger, Landais, with the *Alliance*, fled, and John Paul Jones, together with the *Pallas*, stood up to meet the fleet.

The most interesting battle of the Revolution—the most remarkable ship duel known to the annals of the sea—was at hand. The British fleet was in charge of the line-of-battle ship *Serapis* and the sloop-of-war *Countess of Scarborough.* Allen ("Battles of the British Navy," vol. I, p. 288) says that the battery of the *Serapis* "consisted of twenty long 18-pounders on the lower deck, twenty-two long 12-pounders on the main deck, and two long

6-pounders on the forecastle." As Allen deliberately misrepresents the forces of British ships in describing British battles it is certain that the *Serapis* carried no smaller battery than that here given. She could therefore fire a broadside of at least 318 pounds of shot.

As the *Serapis* tacked out in front of the merchantmen the *Pallas* went off in search of the *Countess of Scarborough*, leaving the *Bonhomme Richard* to fight it out with the liner. The wind was light and the *Richard* was slow. The whole afternoon was passed in drifting together. At 7 o'clock, after nightfall, Jones turned to the westward off the weather (it was the port bow) of the *Serapis* and only a pistol shot away. At that, Captain Richard Pearson, commanding the *Serapis*, hailed twice, and Jones replied to the second hail with a broadside.

Jones had secured an excellent position for a cannon fight but, unhappily, this first broadside did the *Richard* more harm than it did the *Serapis*. Two of the condemned 18-pounders on the lower deck burst, killing nearly every member of their crews and badly demoralizing all the sailors on that deck. A few more shot were fired from the one 18-pounder that remained mounted, but in a few minutes it had to be abandoned on account of the flinching of the men. The *Richard* had gone into battle firing a broadside of 258 pounds, but she was now reduced to 204 against the 318 of the *Serapis*. Worse yet, when Jones thought to head across the bows of the *Serapis*, where he might rake her from end to end, he failed because the *Serapis* was able to sail better. In fact she was then getting into a position to cross the bows of the *Richard*, and to prevent that Jones brought the bow of the *Richard* toward the wind and threw her sails aback to send her astern, parallel with the enemy.

By this movement the two ships were placed side by side and no more than sixty feet apart. It was a position

where the preponderance of gun power on the *Serapis* would have its greatest effect. The 12-pounders of the *Richard* were well handled, but the shot from the 18-pounders on the *Serapis* were a half heavier, and they simply cut the *Richard's* rotten old timbers into dust. Jones had been thinking of trying to cross the stern of the *Serapis* to rake her, but the effect of the broadsides showed him that his only hope lay in getting alongside and boarding. He therefore filled away his sails and headed for the enemy's waist, only to fail once more because the *Richard* was so sluggish that she merely bumped into the stern of the *Serapis*.

As the two vessels then lay (bow to stern), no shot was fired on either side because no gun could be brought to bear. For a time, too, not a voice was heard on either side. As he was looking for boarders to come, Captain Pearson called his men aft to repel the Americans, but when none came to be repelled he began to think they had given up the fight altogether—a natural thought, for he had seen the work of his own guns—and he shouted:

"Has your ship struck?"

The fight had lasted for nearly an hour. In that time Jones had twice failed in efforts to gain a position that would be decisive. The battery of the *Richard* had been reduced not only by the loss of the 18-pounders but by a number of 12-pounders that had been dismounted. Nor was that the worst, for, as the *Richard* had rolled to the long swell of the sea, several shot had penetrated below the water-line. She was already wounded beyond hope and sinking, but John Paul Jones replied:

"I have not yet begun to fight!"

Jones found it impossible to board the *Serapis* in the position in which the ships lay, because his men would have to run out on the bowsprit and drop in a thin line down on the quarterdeck of the *Serapis*, where the British

stood in a well-ordered mass to receive them. So he backed his sails once more and drifted clear to look for another opening. To prevent the *Richard* crossing her stern, the *Serapis* now backed her sails and began to drift astern, turning stern first away to the north. On seeing this, Jones immediately filled his sails, intending to lay the *Richard* across the bows of the *Serapis* in a position like the cross-mark on the letter T, where he could use his guns to rake her while she could not bring a gun to bear. It was his last hope, perhaps, and it succeeded in an unexpected way. The bowsprit of the *Serapis* was brought in "over the poop by the mizzen-mast," and then "Captain Jones with his own hands made fast to the mizzen-mast of the *Bonhomme Richard* the ropes that hung from the enemy's bowsprit." The time to begin the fight had come.

As the two ships now drifted with the wind, the stern of the *Serapis* swung in against the bow of the *Richard*, bringing the two ships together with their starboard sides rubbing each other. In some places the ports were opposite each other, and in others the ports lay opposite the blank side of the enemy. In the matter of gun power the *Serapis* now had a great advantage because her starboard battery was entirely fresh, while that of the *Richard* had been greatly weakened by the previous firing. Crossing over, the men of the *Serapis* fired the guns and blew their ports open.

"A novelty was now presented to many witnesses but few admirers," as Lieutenant Dale said. Neither crew could load their guns without poking the ends of their long-handled rammers through the ports of the enemy, and in a spirit of fair play this was allowed on both sides.

While the play was fair it was so unequal that in a short time all the guns on the *Richard's* broadside except the two on the poop were put out of action. She had only

two 9-pounders against the entire broadside of the British liner. In a brief time the side of the *Richard* from the mainmast aft was entirely cut away save for a timber here and there between the muzzles of the British guns. But for these the upper deck of the *Richard* would have fallen on the lower. The shot that worked such havoc on her fighting side cut away the further side also until there was a clean sweep across her deck and the shot fired thereafter from some of the guns of the *Serapis* flew clear of all and fell into the water beyond. In the meantime the water had come in through the shot holes below the water-line until it was five feet deep in the hold, and burning wads from the guns of the *Serapis* set the *Richard* on fire in a number of places, including one close to the magazine. Jones in his place on the quarter-deck was cheering on his men and using his two guns to clear the enemy's deck of men, but down below despair seized upon all. The surgeon first lost his nerve. The water rose until he found the operating table, on which he placed the wounded, floating from under his hands with the motion of the ship, and running on deck he begged Jones to surrender before they were all drowned. But Jones replied:

"What, Doctor? Would you have me surrender to a drop of water? Here, help me get this gun over to the other side."

The doctor ran below, and Jones, with some of his men, brought one of the 9-pounders from the off to the fighting side of the deck, so that he had three with which to fight on.

Then the *Alliance* came along, ostensibly to join in the attack on the *Serapis;* but Landais, taking advantage of the smoke and confusion of battle, and of the fact that his gunners were under decks, where they could not see what they were doing, fired two broadsides into the *Richard.* At the first broadside the crew of the *Richard* cried out to tell the *Alliance* that they were attacking friends,

and as soon as possible signal lights were set on that side of the ship. But when the second broadside was fired from her the *Richard's* crew began to cry that the British had taken the *Alliance*. At that the gunner of the *Richard*, crazed by fear, ran aft to haul down her flag, and on finding that it had been shot away he began to bawl for quarter. Jones instantly hurled a pistol at the gunner, hitting him in the head, fracturing his skull and knocking him down a hatch. That ended the appeal for quarter, but Captain Pearson had heard the cry, and he shouted to ask Jones if quarter was demanded. He got no satisfactory reply, and concluding that the *Richard's* crew were in a bad way, he ordered his men to board her. They started with a shout, but as they came to the rail, Jones leaped from the quarter-deck and with a pike in hand met them. And on seeing him "they imagined he had, as they said, a large corps" in reserve. So they fled. As Carlyle said of certain Austrian officers who once fled from the presence of Frederick the Great, they were overawed by the divinity that hedges about the person of such a sea king. One sees from the British portraits of Jones how these sailors thought he looked.

On returning to his 9-pounders, Jones found that the supply of cartridges had ceased to come. Dale was sent below to learn the trouble. He found enough. At a glance he saw that the water was swelling to the hatches in the lower hold, that flames near the magazine might cause an explosion at any moment, and that the master-at-arms, frightened into supposing that the ship was sinking, had liberated the 300 prisoners that had been taken from prizes. These men were now swarming up the hatch. Instead of quailing, Dale shouted that the *Serapis* was sinking and that the only hope of life was in keeping the *Richard* afloat. Then he sent part of the prisoners to the pumps, where they worked in relays until they fell

exhausted, while others were put to fighting the flames near the magazine.

But now the end was at hand. With his 9-pounders and with the aid of musketry Jones succeeded in clearing the men off the upper deck of the *Serapis*. A man in the maintop of the *Richard* (one account says it was Midshipman Nathaniel Fanning), took a bucket full of hand-grenades—small shells—out on the mainyard of the *Richard*, where it extended above the deck of the *Serapis*, and reaching a convenient point for the purpose began to throw the grenades down an open hatch to the next deck. In a moment one of the shells exploded on a pile of cartridges that had been placed there for the use of the gunners, a pile that extended from the mainmast well aft.

"The effect was tremendous. More than twenty of the enemy were blown to pieces, and many stood with only the collars of their shirts upon their bodies." (Dale.)

It was about 9 o'clock when this explosion occurred. The flames set the ship on fire in a dozen places and disheartened captain and crew alike. They fought, however, until 10 o'clock, when the *Alliance* came back once more. This time Landais did not dare to attack the *Richard* openly, but according to his own statement, made next day, he loaded his guns with grape shot, "which I knew would scatter," and then fired a broadside into the stern of the *Serapis* and the bow of the *Richard*.

On receiving this broadside, Captain Pearson, as he says in his report, "found it in vain, and, in short, impracticable, from the situation we were in, to stand out any longer, with the least prospect of success. I therefore struck (our mainmast at the same time went by the board)." ("Annual Register," vol. XXII, p. 311.)

Lieutenant Dale at once boarded the *Serapis*, followed (Converse, p. 193) by acting-Lieutenant John Mayrant and a number of men. Captain Pearson and a British

lieutenant were escorted to the *Richard*, and then the firing from the *Serapis* was stopped.

John Paul Jones with his rotten old Indiaman had beaten a British liner just off the stocks. The spectacle there afforded was the most remarkable known to the annals of the sea, for, as Buell has pointed out with emphasis, while the *Bonhomme Richard* was steadily sinking—was destroyed beyond hope—as Jones stood on her deck he could yet command, and did command, the ship that had shot her to pieces.

And this spectacle was seen in the moonlight by 1,500 people who gathered on Flamborough Head to witness the fight.

At 9 o'clock in the forenoon of the next day the last boat left the side of the *Richard*. Her masts and sails were in good order and her flag was left flying from her mizzen truck. Thereafter the people on the other ships watched her in silence as she rolled and pitched heavily over the long waves, sinking steadily as they gazed, until at 10 o'clock her bow dipped under a wave, failed to rise with the next, and then down she sank, and the last that was seen of the *Bonhomme Richard* was her flag, the Stars and Stripes, trailing out, triumphant, from her mizzen truck.

In the course of a speech which the British Minister of Colonial Affairs made before Parliament, as reported in the "Annual Register," 1778, on pages 46 and 47, he said: "If America should grow into a separate empire it must of course cause such a revolution in the political system of the world that a bare apprehension of the unknown consequences which might proceed from so untried a state of public affairs would be sufficient to stagger the resolution of our most determined enemies." To this a member of Parliament added that "the contest now was not whether America should be dependent on the British

legislature, but whether Great Britain or America should be independent. Both could not exist in that state together. For such were the sources of wealth and power in that vast Continent . . . that this small island would be so cramped in its peculiar resources that it must in a few years sink to nothing, and perhaps be reduced to that most degrading and calamitous of all possible situations, the becoming of a vassal to our own rebellious colonies if they were once permitted to establish their independence and their power."

It was in those words that the fear of the "American Peril" first found expression, and in those words may be seen the condition of mind created by the appearance of American ships of war upon the coasts of an enemy.

Of the subsequent career of John Paul Jones it need only be said here that he was all but overwhelmed with praise at Paris. The king gave him a sword, and, with the consent of the Congress, the Grand Cross of the Order of Military Merit. He arrived in America once more in February, 1781. Instigated by his personal enemies (and John Paul Jones was a man whom we may "love for the enemies he has made"), the Congress investigated his career. Instead of censuring him, however, the Congress, on April 14, 1781, tendered him a vote of thanks "for the zeal, prudence and intrepidity with which he has supported the American flag; for his bold and successful enterprises to redeem from captivity the citizens of the States . . . and in general for the good conduct and eminent services by which he has added lustre to his character and to the American arms." He was then placed at the head of the navy. In 1787 the Congress voted him a gold medal. No other naval officer of the Revolution was thus honored.

CHAPTER IV

AT THE END OF THE WAR

Although brief space can be given to the other captains of the Revolution because their work on the whole had no decisive influence on the war, some account must be given of Nicholas Biddle and John Barry.

Biddle's first command was the Pennsylvania galley *Franklin*. From her he was promoted to the *Doria*, as noted, and his good work in her as a commerce destroyer led to his transfer to the *Randolph*, one of the 32-gun frigates that the Congress was building. She proved to be an unlucky ship. Sailors left her in the Delaware to ship on privateers. She was dismasted soon after leaving port in February, 1777, and then British renegades in her crew tried to carry her to Halifax. Finally, at 8 o'clock at night, on March 7, 1778, she was found in the West Indies under the guns of the British liner *Yarmouth*, rated as a sixty-four but carrying seventy guns. (Charnock, vol. III, p. 167.)

Biddle had waited for her. It is said that he had often talked with John Paul Jones of the results that would follow if "by exceedingly desperate fighting one of our ships" should "conquer one of theirs of markedly superior force"; he had hoped that he might be the captain upon whom Fortune was thus to confer the honor of fighting such a battle; he had always been ready for the chance, and now the hour was at hand.

As the liner, with her men at quarters, ranged along the weather side of the *Randolph* and hailed her, one of the *Randolph's* lieutenants shouted:

"This is the *Randolph.*" At the same moment he flung the Stars and Stripes to the breeze and then Biddle fired a broadside into the enemy. Because of the thickness of her timbers, the size and number of her guns—her main deck guns were 24-pounders, while the *Randolph's* best were 12-pounders—and the number of her crew, the *Yarmouth* was of more than four times the force of the *Randolph,* but Biddle began the battle. He was soon shot down—a bullet pierced his thigh—yet, seated in a chair at the forward end of the quarterdeck, he cheered on his men, who fired three broadsides to the British one until it was seen that neither speed of firing nor accuracy of aim could win in such a contest. At that Biddle ordered the helm down, and he was luffing up in order to grapple the enemy and fight it out on her deck by boarding—315 men against 500—when fire reached the magazine beneath his feet and blew the *Randolph* out of water.

So near was the *Randolph* at this moment that splintered pieces of her wrecked hull fell upon the deck of the *Yarmouth,* and with them was an American ensign, rolled up ready for hoisting in case the one then flying should be shot away. It fell on the *Yarmouth's* forecastle, unsinged. The *Yarmouth* passed on with her carpenters and riggers busy. She had lost five men killed and twelve wounded. Four days later she happened to sail over the ground of the brief battle when she found four men afloat on a piece of the *Randolph*—the sole survivors out of her crew of 315.

"Nick Biddle—poor, brave Nick—was the kind of naval captain that the god of battles makes."

Captain John Barry was the first officer sailing under the "union" flag to capture an enemy's warship. The "union" flag was made of thirteen stripes with the British union in the upper left hand corner. He left port in the *Lexington,* one of the two ships Morris was to provide, and on April 7, 1776, captured the British sloop *Edward,*

a tender of the frigate *Liverpool.* Barry was then promoted to the frigate *Effingham,* but she was destroyed in the Delaware and for a time he helped "Mad" Anthony Wayne raid the British foragers who came from Philadelphia while Washington's army was at Valley Forge. Finally he was sent to the frigate *Raleigh* and he sailed from Boston on September 25, 1778. The next day he fell in with the 50-gun ship *Experiment* and the frigate *Unicorn,* of the enemy's navy, and for nearly two days gave them the race of a lifetime. Then the wind failed and after a blood-stirring fight he ran his ship ashore on the coast of Maine and abandoned her. Barry was one of the men who would not surrender. While in command of the frigate *Alliance* in May, 1781, he captured two British brigs that had the temerity to attack him, and then, while on his way to Havana, in 1782, fought the last naval battle of the war by attacking the frigate *Sibyl,* one of a British squadron which he encountered. Of course, with the other ships to help her, the *Sibyl* was able to escape, but the affair is worth mention if only to show the enterprise of this fighting Irishman.

The most important proposition that was brought to the attention of the Congress in connection with the navy was that made by Silas Deane. On November 1, 1778, Deane, who had been one of the American envoys in France, submitted certain "proposals for equipping such a fleet as will be sufficient to defend the coasts and commerce of the United States against any force which Great Britain will be able to send to America." (Wharton, vol. II, p. 824.)

In these proposals Deane pointed out that in order to obtain a foreign loan (for which negotiations were then in hand), it was necessary to set "on foot a naval force," because, "without a naval force sufficient to protect in some degree our commerce as it revives, it will be very

difficult if not impossible to pay either the principal or the interest of the money we may borrow." To this end Mr. Deane proposed that the Congress build twenty large ships "*of a new construction*, carrying forty-two to forty-eight cannon, being equal to sixty-four and even seventy-four line-of-battle ships." That was the first public statement of what has since been the American idea of a war-ship. For here were to be built twenty ships on the frigate model, carrying from thirty to thirty-six guns of the heaviest calibre on one deck, with the remaining guns of a somewhat lighter calibre on the quarter-deck and forecastle. The size of the timbers, the thickness of the planks and the spread of sails on these frigates were to be equal to what could be found on the 74-gun liners.

The last feature of the Revolution, and perhaps the most important, is the work of the privateers. On December 25, 1775, the Congress provided for commissions to be issued to privateers "which the good people of these colonies" wished to fit out in pursuit of the merchantmen of Great Britain. Franklin and a few others of the time realized that privateering was merely legalized piracy, but the people of the country as a whole were in a state of civilization (as, indeed, were the people of Europe), where the use of privateers seemed not only permissible but praiseworthy.

The growth of the fleet thus set afloat was prodigious. A volume issued by the Librarian of Congress shows that the Continental Congress bonded 1,699 privateers during this war. They varied in force from the fishing smack *Wasp*, having no cannon and a crew of but nine men, to the *Deane*, of Connecticut, carrying thirty guns and a crew of 210 men. Forty-five of these privateers were ships of twenty guns and a hundred men or better. The list contains many duplicates, of course, but on the other hand

there were not a few privateers afloat early in the war that were not bonded by the Congress.

In estimating the total American privateer force of the whole war Hale says (Winsor's "History of America," vol. VI, p. 587): "Between the beginning and end of the war the Salem vessels alone numbered nearly 150. The Massachusetts Archives give a list of 365 as commissioned and belonging in Boston." The total number of Massachusetts privateers is estimated at "more than 600." In the course of the war, according to Hale, "Massachusetts alone sent 60,000 men" afloat as privateers—an estimate probably too high. Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Connecticut probably sent 20,000 more. After these came the fleets of the Delaware and the Chesapeake and other more southern waters.

It is, therefore, certain that more than a thousand different privateers, manned with nearly 80,000 men, sailed from the American ports to hunt for British merchantmen. The most liberal estimate of the number of vessels captured is found in the "American Antiquarian Society Proceedings," dated October, 1888, p. 394. There Hale says: "It will also appear that more than 3,000 prizes from the British merchant marine were captured by the American navy and privateersmen." That "this loss crippled very severely the mercantile prosperity of England" is beyond question.

There is another side of the matter, however, now to be examined. First, such damage as was done by privateers might have been done at less expense by well-fitted naval ships. Then, at the time that it was recorded "that the American armed ships" had captured all told 773 of the British merchantmen and had sent into port 559 of them, the British armed ships had taken and sent into port 904 American ships of all kinds. Many of the privateers carried crews and armaments so small that even armed

merchantmen took some of them, and only in rare cases was an American privateer able to beat off an English man-o'-war of anywhere near its own force. When we come to set the 904 ships captured from us against the 559 we captured from the British the much-lauded work of the privateers is seen in its proper light.

The ship owners in their greed for "easy money" went mad. "Ships that were deemed worth £1000 twelve months ago now sell for £3000," wrote Robert Morris in December, 1776, and this increase in price was wholly due to the insistent demand for privateers. The builders of two of the frigates the Congress had laid down in Rhode Island stole Government materials and used them in building privateers.

The demoralization of the ship owners spread to the sailors. Wages rose to $30 and $40, and finally to $60 a month, on the privateers. At the same time the prospect of shares in fat prizes was held out to them. The Congress paid only $8 a month and the shares of naval prizes were less. The consequences of this condition of affairs were far-reaching. The naval officers were unable to man their ships. The spirit of the occasion led many men to enlist in the naval ships, draw their advance pay, and then "jump the bounty" and ship in a privateer. The demoralization spread to the army. "Many of the Continental troops now in our service pant for the expiration of their enlistments in order that they may partake of the spoils of the West Indies," wrote Benjamin Rush. "At a moderate estimate there are now not less than 10,000 men belonging to New England on board privateers. New England and the Continent cannot spare them."

The number of men in the army, including militia called out for a service of a few weeks, was at best 90,000. With the exception of a few brief intervals, the number of men

afloat in the privateers was as great as the number serving in the army, and at some times the number afloat was far greater. The largest number of men employed in the British navy at any time was 87,000. We sent afloat in privateers almost as many men as the British navy employed on all stations, including the East Indies. The number of men in our privateers was at all times at least twice as great as the number of British sailors kept on the American station.

These facts are most important. For if our privateer forces could have been properly concentrated and handled on battleships they would have swept the enemy from the American coast and then from the Seven Seas. Greed blinded patriotism and statesmanship. There is no instance on record where such a splendid power was wasted as was the sea power of the United States in the War of the Revolution. The consideration of these facts is not wholly academic; their bearing on modern naval policy is obvious. They demonstrate the importance of building the most powerful ships possible.

Even that is not all to be said of the evil of that privateering. The stories of the successes of the few were told and retold as time passed, while the losses of the many were forgotten. Our histories took up and emphasized the tales. The work of the privateers was, therefore, lauded higher and higher from year to year, and the stories of the victories of the untrained militia (which were, in fact, very few indeed) were added. So the people came to believe not only that poorly armed privateers, aided by untrained militia, had won our liberties, but they became well assured that such forces were adequate to defend the nation from every kind of aggression. They literally believed that the interest of our merchants in legalized piracy would prove sufficient to protect the growing high-seas commerce of the nation in all parts of the

world. And when to this faith was added the hatred of a standing army that had had so large a part in developing the revolutionary spirit, the mass of the people concluded that the maintenance of a navy would be a menace to American liberty.

When the War of the Revolution ended we had left as a nucleus of a navy our best frigate, the *Alliance*. To preserve the liberties of the young republic from the threatening dangers of a standing navy this frigate was ordered sold on June 3, 1785, as a merchantman. The vote in favor of the sale was 18 to 4. She was eventually thrown back into the hands of the Government and then was set ashore on Pellet's Island, in the Delaware, where she gradually sank in the mud. And there her bones lie to this day.

While the *Alliance* was allowed to lie there rotting, a gang of pirates on the north coast of Africa captured and enslaved a number of American seamen. We owe much to those African pirates, for while we paid them more than two million of dollars in tribute money to hire them to let our merchantmen trade in the Mediterranean Sea in peace, they compelled our legislators at last to build and maintain naval ships, and thus made it possible not only to fight successfully a second war for liberty, but what was of equal benefit, to escape from the dominion of a detestable national ideal and from a national reputation the memory of which is still humiliating.

CHAPTER V

THE AFRICAN PIRATES AND THE FRENCH SPOLIATIONS

Any consideration of the history of the period just after the Revolution shows that the nation was like a young robin just from the nest—it was blatant, and for safety depended not at all on beak or claws. Nature provides the young robin with a speckled breast for its concealment, and nature had provided "the broad Atlantic" to protect the fledgling republic. How far the protective coloring serves the bird is known to all naturalists; the extent of the protection afforded the nation by "the broad Atlantic" shall now be set forth.

On July 25, 1785, the schooner *Maria*, Captain Isaac Stephenson, of Boston, was captured by Algerine pirates off Cape St. Vincent, and five days later the ship *Dauphin*, Captain Richard O'Brien, of Philadelphia, was taken by the same pirates at a point fifty leagues west of Lisbon. These vessels, with their crews, numbering twenty-one all told, were carried to Algiers, where the crews were enslaved and the property appropriated.

Fully to appreciate this assault upon American commerce it should be recalled that for many years theretofore the rulers of Morocco, Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, though tributary to the Sultan of Turkey, were yet so far independent that they made war on whom, and when, they pleased. Their armed ships cruised through the Mediterranean and as far as the Azores and the English

Channel in search of the merchant ships of the nations that had not made treaties with them.

The naval power of these little countries was insignificant. Algiers, the most powerful, had nine ships ranging in force from sixteen to thirty-two guns each, with fifty gunboats carrying a 12-pounder each, for harbor defence. Yet every maritime nation of Europe had suffered from the depredations of these pirates, and the leading nations had purchased peace with them at an expense so great that the account seems incredible. Indeed, the whole story of the Barbary pirates, as told in the documents to be found in the "Foreign Relations" volumes of the "American State Papers," is now well-nigh unbelievable. Thus Great Britain is said to have paid an annual tribute of $280,000. France paid $100,000 a year with "presents" every ten years. Spain, by a cash payment estimated at a sum above $3,000,000, obtained a treaty of peace with no annual tribute.

The reason for paying these enormous sums is remarkable. In the state of civilization then prevailing in Europe each nation preferred to buy a peace for itself rather than to wipe out the pirates, because, when a peace was purchased, the pirates were left free to prey on the commerce of competing nations that had not made such a peace. The pirates were urgently encouraged to raid the ships of other nations. The most civilized nations of Europe held and openly avowed the theory that the best way to promote their own mercantile interests was found in destroying the commerce of competing nations. And that theory was practiced, if not openly avowed, as late as our Civil War, as shall appear.

After our War of the Revolution came to an end, and our merchants attempted to trade in the Mediterranean, the Algiers agent of the British Government called the attention of the Corsairs to the fact that the ships under the new flag were good prize.

"By ——, we must put a check to these people, they are ruining our commerce here," said the British consul at Tunis, on hearing that American ships had entered the Mediterranean. ("Life of General Eaton," p. 105.)

"America has three powerful enemies in Algiers, viz.: French and Spanish and the most inveterate is the English," wrote Captain O'Brien after his capture.

These quotations are made to show the ways of commerce, and more especially to show that the Americans knew very well the disposition of the European governments in such matters.

Ministers to conclude treaties with the Barbary powers were appointed on May 12, 1784, and on March 12, 1785, it was determined to send agents directly to the pirate cities. The expense then provided for was $80,000.

A treaty, ratified by the Congress on July 18, 1787, was secured with Morocco at a cost of about $9,500, but before the American agents had reached Algiers the ships mentioned had been taken, and the Dey demanded a ransom of $59,496 for the captives as a preliminary step in the negotiation of a treaty. At that the Congress balked.

Then, to cause the pirate chief to reduce his price, our Government broke off all negotiations, and even refused to repay the money which a charitable resident of Algiers had advanced to keep the captives from actual hunger. In due time the plague carried off six of the unfortunates and one was ransomed by his relatives. There the matter rested until a constitution was adopted and Washington was elected President.

On May 14, 1790, a petition from the enslaved Americans was presented to the House of Representatives, which referred it to Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. Mr. Jefferson reported that "it rests with Congress to decide between war, tribute and ransom." Congress, "counting their interest more than their honor" (as Jefferson had

said in speaking of European tribute-paying), preferred "tribute and ransom." On February 22, 1792, the Senate resolved that it would ratify a treaty, if one could be made, paying $100,000 for peace with Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, $40,000 for the ransom of the captives and an annual tribute of $24,000 a year to Algiers.

In the meantime a new emperor having ascended the throne in Morocco his favor was purchased at an expense of $25,000, which was counted a fine bargain.

Negotiations were now opened with Algiers, but the European agents living there at once made active opposition. They had learned through some traitor at Philadelphia what Congress, in secret session, had agreed to pay, and when they told the Dey about the sums voted he readily acceded to their request to raise his demands to a larger sum. And then, lest the American agents, on arriving, should meet the Dey's new demands, the British agent, Mr. Charles Logie, planned a new raid on American commerce.

The Portuguese (they had refused to make peace with the pirates), for the sake of protecting ships trading to their ports, had been affording convoy to such American merchantmen as had ventured into the waters near Gibraltar since 1786. The protection thus afforded had served to keep the Algerine corsairs within the Mediterranean. Consul Logie arranged a truce between Algiers and Portugal, under which the Dey had permission to send his corsairs to cruise for American ships on the Atlantic. During October and November, 1793, eleven American merchantmen were taken and the number of enslaved Americans was raised to 115.

"It is needless for me, who have suffered much, to touch on the distress of these unfortunate men," said Captain Richard O'Brien, in reporting the arrival of the new captives. "I have known my country—nine years' captivity —by her cruelty."

Stung by this reproach, Colonel David Humphreys, American Minister to Portugal, wrote to the Secretary of State, underscoring some of his words: "*If we are to have a commerce* we must have *a naval force* (to a certain extent) to defend it."

With all his indignation the Colonel felt obliged to say, "to a certain extent." Good politician that he was, he knew that if he were to advocate an efficient navy he would arouse instant opposition at home.

The Colonel's appeal had some effect. The whole correspondence was submitted to Congress (the student of history can find it in the "American State Papers," vol. I), and after it had been considered in secret session for two days Congress

"Resolved, That a naval force . . . ought to be provided for the protection of the commerce of the United States *against Algerine cruisers.*"

This resolution prevailed in the House by a vote of 43 to 41, and it should be noted that James Madison, who was to be the President in a most critical period of the coming century, was of those who voted in the negative.

Out of this resolution grew a law providing for four 44-gun frigates and two 36-gun frigates. The law was approved on March 27, 1794. While the carpenters stretched the keels of the new warships the negotiations with the pirates were continued to a successful issue. The exact cost of this treaty was never made public, but in a report of the Secretary of the Treasury, dated January 4, 1797, the total expense of ransoming the prisoners and buying a treaty is placed at $992,463.25. In this sum is included the cost of a fine frigate which was given to the pirates as a part of the inducement to preserve the peace. Whatever conscientious scruples the people had about building a navy for their own defence they had none about supplying the pirates with the best possible

means of making further aggressions. That, however, is not all the expense. The treaty provided for an annual tribute of "12,000 sequins in maritime stores" to be delivered in Algiers. The cost of the stores given for the first two years under this agreement, including the freight from the United States to Algiers, amounted to $144,-246.63. Blackmail to the extent of $34,500 had been paid already to Morocco, and peace was yet to be purchased of Tunis and Tripoli.

The American people had preferred "tribute and ransom" to "war," chiefly because they supposed that course would be the cheaper. But "tribute and ransom" had cost not less than $1,171,209.88, down to January 4, 1797, and, to paraphrase John Paul Jones, they might well have said "we have not yet begun to pay blackmail." And yet they had been told ("Naval Affairs," vol. I, p. 20), that the cost of the six frigates which would have saved their honor would be but $1,141,160, armed and equipped for service.

The worst feature of this story, however, is yet to be considered, for, in thus choosing to pay tribute rather than fight, the American people made public proclamation of their ideal of national life—they thus announced that they would save money at a sacrifice of honor. How the reputation which we thus began to acquire was afterwards cultivated, during the period just before the War of 1812, is a story to be told further on.

In the meantime Washington had gone on with the work of navy building as rapidly as possible. Joshua Humphreys, a notable shipbuilder of Philadelphia, had taken up Deane's idea of "a new construction," and he was now employed to elaborate it in the models of the new ships. Taking the *Constitution*, which was laid down at Boston, as the type of the 44-gun frigates, it is seen that she had a gun-deck that was 174 feet 10.5 inches long, and

on this she carried thirty long 24-pounders, and that, too, although Congress had contemplated 18-pounders and 9-pounders only. That gun-deck was longer than the gun-deck on any line-of-battle ship of less than seventy-four guns in the world at that time (see Charnock), and there were some 74's with shorter gun-decks. The battery was that commonly used on the main deck of the ordinary 74-gun ship. As the *Constitution* was designed to carry twenty guns of smaller size (12-pounders at first) on her upper deck, it was believed that she could not only overpower any frigate in the world, but that she would be able to give a good account of herself in an engagement with the smaller liners.

Next to gun-power the designers placed speed. "It is expected that the commanders will have it in their power to engage or not," wrote Humphreys. This expectation was not realized—the ships were not especially speedy—but it is notable that to thickness of walls not a thought was given. They depended on gun-power, not thick walls, for protection.

Before the ships could be completed the treaty with Algiers was ratified—March 2, 1796. Congress had provided that the work on the ships should be suspended as soon as peace with blackmail was secure. Washington was then President. He saw and said that a navy might "prevent the necessity of going to war by discouraging belligerent powers from committing such violations of the rights of the neutral party as may, first or last, leave no other option." He therefore urged the completion of the *Constitution*, the *United States* and the *Constellation*, which were already well under way.

Few people now read the "Annals of Congress," and that is a pity, for they are most instructive, however depressing to American vanity. The discussions over the completion of these frigates ran on almost interminably.

During the time of these discussions, a French privateer looted an English merchantman within sight of Charleston, S. C., and the story was promptly told in Congress. In the West Indies 1-gun picaroons under the French flag and even rowboats without guns captured and looted merchantmen under the American flag. More than three hundred American ships were looted in one year, by privateers and pirates fitted out from French ports, and a West India governor boasted that he and his people were growing rich on the spoils.

And yet Congressmen—especially members of the House—talked and haggled. Thus Gabriel Christie said he would much rather the three frigates were "burnt than manned." John Page asserted that "commercial retaliation" would serve better than frigates in bringing France to do us justice. Another pointed to China as a nation that enjoyed a profitable commerce in spite of the fact that it had neither merchantmen nor warships. He was sure that China was thus far an example to the United States. The name of this statesman is not given in the "Annals," but Albert Gallatin, who was Secretary of the Treasury under Jefferson, approved and defended the unnamed. ("Annals of Congress," February, 1797, p. 2129.) John Swanwick, in discussing the use of frigates as convoys of merchantmen bound to the West Indies opposed the measure on the ground that "when the privateers and cruisers in those seas learnt that we had frigates out they would become more acrimonious than ever."

It was in those days that "Hail Columbia" was written. People sang "Hail ye heroes, heaven-born band," while their representatives, with their approval, voted against using the frigates as convoys lest such use make the privateers "more acrimonious than ever."

However, the aggressions at last forced the nation to

fight. John Adams had become President meantime, and he had an adequate faith in guns afloat. Congress not only consented to complete the frigates, but on April 20, 1798, the sum of $950,000 was voted for the purchase and equipment of an additional naval force.

Thereafter those who saw that submission did but add to the aggressions and spoliations, and that a nation must compel respect before it can hope for peace—those members of Congress who saw this, and advocated the use of a navy, moved on rapidly. By the act of April 30, 1798, the Navy Department was established. On May 4 the President was authorized to procure cannon and build foundries and armories. At the same time the sum of $80,000 was voted for galleys to be used as porcupine quills. Jefferson was then Vice-President and the bill originated in the Senate. Jefferson's ideas of war were plagiarized from the *sphingurinæ*.

In June the President was authorized to accept, if offered by private citizens, six frigates and six sloops-of-war, and pay for them with Government bonds. On July 7 the old treaties, nominally yet in force, were abrogated. On the 11th a marine corps of 881 officers and men was provided for, and, on the 16th, a law was signed that not only authorized the President to complete the three frigates that had been contemplated when first the Algerine aggressions roused the nation to resistance, but it permitted the building of three more frigates of "not less than thirty-two guns."

In the meantime, by the Act of May, 1798, the President was authorized "to instruct and direct the commanders of the armed vessels of the United States to seize, take and bring in" any "armed vessel found hovering on the coast of the United States for the purpose of committing depredations"; and this was supplemented by the Act of July 9 which authorized the naval ships to "subdue, seize

and take any armed French vessel which shall be found within the jurisdictional limits of the United States, *or elsewhere on the high seas.*"

In some respects this was the most important naval act ever passed by Congress. For it became a law at the beginning of the work of the new navy, and it declared that if we were to compel an enemy to do us justice we must not depend on harbor defence galleys, but must send ships fit to keep the sea in search of the enemy in his own waters.

The new American navy—three frigates and twelve converted merchantmen—was ordered forth to fight for the honor of the flag. For thirteen years the American people, "counting their interest more than their honor," had preferred "tribute and ransom" to "war." In the hope of peace they had submitted to every outrage upon the life and the liberty as well as the property of their citizens. They had believed that submission would soften the hearts of their oppressors, but they had seen the number of outrages steadily increase instead of diminish. Now like hunted beasts driven to a corner they had turned and shown their teeth.

CHAPTER VI

BATTLES OF THE WAR WITH FRANCE

The sloop-of-war *Delaware*, Captain S. Decatur, Sr., had the luck to make the first stroke of the war. She fell in with a French privateer near the coast. As her papers showed, the privateer had captured a number of American vessels. She was sent in and bought for service in the navy under the name of *Retaliation*.

On February 9, 1799, the *Constellation*, Captain Thomas Truxton, was cruising at a point five leagues to the north and east of Nevis Island, in the West Indies. At noon a sail was seen in the southeast, and Truxton squared away before the northeast trades to head her off. The stranger—it was the French frigate *Insurgent*, Captain Barreaut—at first made no effort to escape, but while awaiting the coming of the *Constellation* she had the misfortune to lose her maintopmast. She then tried to reach a nearby port, but the *Constellation* overhauled her, and then she came to the wind on the port tack with her guns out.

Swinging down under easy sail the *Constellation* came to the wind on the weather quarter of the enemy. Captain Barreaut then hailed several times, but Truxton made no reply until he was in a position where every gun would bear, and then he answered with a broadside. It was the first opportunity that a frigate of the new navy had had to shoot for the honor of the flag, and every gun was aimed to strike home in the hull. The broadside showed the French captain that he was no match for the Yankee

in gun fire, yet undismayed, he shouted "Stand by to board!" and put his helm down to bring the *Insurgent* to the side of the *Constellation,* only to find that the loss of his topmast was against him. The attempt to luff, in fact, gave the *Constellation* opportunity to reach ahead, cross the *Insurgent's* bows and rake her fore and aft. This done, the *Constellation* reached on until well on the starboard bow of the enemy, where she maintained her position for nearly an hour, firing with the greatest advantage and receiving in return but a partial broadside at any round from the French guns. Then she crossed the *Insurgent's* bows once more, raked her, and worked aft along the port side again.

It was a most vigorous conflict, for both crews were animated by a sense of national injury. The Frenchmen felt that they were fighting for human freedom against all the world, and that the American people ought to have sided with them in the conflict, especially as the treaty of alliance of 1778 had guaranteed to the French king "the present possessions of the crown of France in America." The Americans, on the other hand, had in mind the lootings of American ships by the French privateers and pirates from the French ports together with the outrages that had been perpetrated upon crews during the lootings. But while each was filled with animosity the results of the fire differed greatly. On the *Constellation* a shot cut through the foretopmast and it was in immediate danger of falling from the pressure of the sail, when Midshipman David Porter climbed the rigging and cut away the yards, relieving the pressure. It was a narrow escape from serious injury, but the fact that a shot from a main-deck gun should have flown that high showed that the Frenchmen were not aiming their guns. On the *Constellation* the gunners were aiming at the *Insurgent's* hull, and within an hour after the first broadside every gun in

the Frenchman's main deck broadside was put out of action.

On seeing how the enemy's fire had decreased, Truxton wore down across the *Insurgent's* stern to rake her for the third time, and at that, at 4:30 o'clock—after a fight of an hour and a quarter—the French flag was hauled down.

The *Insurgent* was much inferior in force, but it was the superior gunnery, not the superior battery, of the *Constellation* that won the fight, as is shown by the fact that the *Insurgent* lost twenty-nine killed and forty-one wounded, while the *Constellation* lost by the enemy's fire but one killed and two wounded.

One story of this affair portrays graphically the character of the officers of the young navy. When the *Insurgent* had surrendered, Lieutenant John Rodgers, Midshipman David Porter and eleven seamen were sent to take charge of her. They found that the Frenchmen had thrown overboard all the handcuffs and shackles commonly used to secure prisoners, and had also disposed of gratings used to cover the hatches when prisoners were to be confined in the lower hold. It was plainly seen, therefore, that they contemplated rising on their captors if opportunity offered. Accordingly, Rogers began to transfer the Frenchmen to the *Constellation* as rapidly as possible, although in the meantime a gale had come on and the sea was getting rough. Moreover, the wrecked condition of the tophamper of the ships interfered with their navigation. As a result of these conditions there were yet 173 prisoners on board the *Insurgent* when night came on, and a little later the ships lost sight of each other in the gloom.

Lieutenant Rodgers with one young midshipman (Porter was eighteen years old), and eleven men were obliged not only to guard 173 prisoners but to handle a badly wrecked ship in a West India gale, with the rocks of Nevis Island alee. Nevertheless John Rodgers, David

Porter and the eleven unnamed bluejackets were equal to the occasion. One determined man, well armed, was placed at each hatch with orders to shoot any prisoner making any attempt to escape. The others cleared away the wreckage and handled the ship. Though they were for three nights and two days without sleep or rest, they brought her into St. Kitts.

An opportunity to make more than one good fight seldom comes to a naval captain, but Truxton was the exception. Having returned to the United States to secure a new crew (Congress refused to allow crews to be enlisted for more than one year), the *Constellation* was fitted with a new battery because the first one was too heavy. She received 18-pounders on her main deck, and the ten long 12's on the quarter-deck were replaced with ten 24-pounder carronades, a short gun using a large shot and a small (about one-third the usual) charge of powder. According to Cooper, this was the first use of carronades in the American navy. Being of light weight they could be fired rapidly, and later they became very popular, although they were utterly absurd, as was proved in the next war.

Thus armed, the *Constellation* returned to the West Indies, and at 7 o'clock A. M., on February 1, 1800, while cruising five leagues west of Bassaterre Roads, Guadaloupe, a sail was seen off to to south'ard. On running down for a look it was seen that the stranger was a frigate carrying at least four more guns than the *Constellation*. Truxton had left a station to which he had been regularly assigned, and in leaving it he was giving the French privateers opportunity to get away in search of American merchantmen. Nevertheless, on seeing that the enemy was somewhat superior in force, he could not resist the temptation to continue the chase. Accordingly throughout that day, the night following and all the next day the *Constellation* stretched every sail, and, finally, as the next

night came on, a growing breeze carried her well down on the enemy's weather quarter. With that the battle lanterns were lighted and word was sent to the guns' crews that they were not to fire a shot until orders were given by the captain. Truxton then climbed on the rail of his ship to hail the enemy. He was answered by a round of shot from her quarter-deck before he had said a word. At that Truxton climbed down again and once more ordered his gunners not to fire until he told them to do so, adding that when the word did come they were "not to throw away a single charge of powder and shot, but to *take good aim,* and to *fire directly into the hull of the enemy.*"

In perfect silence thereafter, save as the water splashed under her bows, the *Constellation* reached ahead with her sails flashing white in reflecting the fire of the enemy's guns until a position was reached to "enable us to return *effectually* his salute," as Truxton said. Then the whole broadside was fired.

It was a little past 8 o'clock when the *Constellation's* broadside was fired. With both crews loading and firing as swiftly as possible both ships reached away, side by side, through the gloom, until 1 o'clock the next morning. At that hour the Frenchman's guns were silenced. Her flag had been lowered twice, meantime, but as the act was not seen on the *Constellation,* the fire was continued, and the Frenchmen returned each time to their guns out of sheer despair. But in the moment of final victory, when Truxton would have gone alongside to take possession of his prize, word was brought him that every shroud and stay supporting the mainmast had been shot away and that the mast must soon fall if it were not secured immediately. Truxton and his men had been so intent on shooting the enemy to pieces that they had failed to observe how their ship had been cut up—a most commendable error, if any error is ever to be commended.

Truxton at once called all hands on deck to save the mast by means of preventer stays, but before one could be put in place the roll of the sea threw the spar over the rail. In the meantime the enemy was drifting away, so that she now escaped altogether.

Midshipman Jarvis and several men were in the top at the time it fell, and all but one man were lost. Jarvis had been warned by an old sailor, but he refused to leave his post, saying:

"If the mast goes we must go with it!"

Some time later it was learned that the French ship was the frigate *Vengence*, Captain Pitot. Her main-deck battery was like that of the *Constellation*. Above she carried sixteen long 12-pounders and eight short 42's. The *Vengence* went to Curaçao to repair damages. A man named Howe, who was a prisoner on the *Vengence* at the time of the action, reported that 186 round shot from the *Constellation* had pierced her hull, and that she was also somewhat cut up in the rigging. Out of her crew that, with some passengers who helped at the guns, numbered under 400, she lost 160 in killed and wounded. The *Constellation* lost twenty-five killed, including those who died of their wounds, and fourteen wounded.

No other officer had anything like as good an opportunity as Truxton, nevertheless there were a number of minor actions that are memorable because of their bearing upon the results of the war. For instance, two schooners were built at Baltimore that were the first light cruisers of the new navy. To a sailor's eye there never was a more beautiful class of naval ships than the old-time schooners, and their crews lived literally in touch with the sea—with their ears down to "the unfathomable dialogue of the ever-moaning brine." Each of these schooners was armed with twelve long 6-pounders. One was named the *Enterprise* and the other the *Experiment*.

In March, 1800, the *Enterprise*, under Lieutenant-Commandant John Shaw, while in the Mona passage fell in with a Spanish brig armed with eighteen 9-pounders—a vessel of double her force. The Spaniard opened fire. The *Enterprise* had already shown superiority in speed—it would have been easy for her to escape from the brig—but Shaw preferred to fight, and at the end of twenty minutes the brig made sail for a far country, to which the *Enterprise* let her go because Spain and the United States were not at war. In the course of the next eight months the *Enterprise* was in five different conflicts, none of which need be described here because all the vessels of the enemy were of inferior force and merely served to give the American crew a little target practice. Then while cruising in the lee of St. Kitts she fell in with the French brig *Flambeau*, carrying twelve 9-pounders and a crew of 110, where the *Enterprise* was armed with 6's and had but 83 men on board. The Frenchman had the windward position, also, but Shaw drove the *Enterprise* alongside to leeward and opened fire.

The two hulls were only twelve yards or so apart—no more than the width of a narrow street—but the Frenchmen on the *Flambeau*, like those on the other French ships already described, had never learned to aim their guns, and at the end of twenty minutes they tacked around and fled for their lives. This, too, proved in vain. Shaw tacked in pursuit, and although he stopped to pick up six men who accidentally fell into the sea from the *Flambeau*, he soon overhauled her and then her flag came down. She had lost forty killed and wounded out of 110. The *Enterprise* lost ten all told.

The *Experiment* had fewer opportunities, but on January 1, 1800, under Lieutenant-Commandant Maley, she made one good fight. With a number of merchantmen she was lying becalmed in the Bight of Leogane. To the

people on shore the little fleet seemed to offer a most pleasing opportunity for plunder. The natives there had often taken American merchantmen with rowboats only, therefore ten barges manned by from thirty-five to forty men each, went afloat.

No more determined band of pirates was ever seen in the West Indies than these. Twice they were driven away by the broadside of the *Experiment*, but on each occasion they landed their dead and wounded, took on fresh men and came again. When they came the third time they were divided into three flotillas of three boats each, which made a dash at the *Experiment* from three different directions at once. In the barges were 270 pirates against a crew of seventy men on the schooner; it was the last and most desperate assault of all, but flesh and blood could not stand up against the fire of the Yankee crew, and the attack failed.

The conflict from first to last was seven hours long. The *Experiment* had two men wounded. Two or three of the pirate barges were sunk with all hands.

On September 13 of this year the *Experiment*, under Lieutenant Charles Stewart, fell in with an 18-gun brig and a 14-gun schooner belonging to the enemy. Stewart's seamanship was to give him lasting fame in the navy. On this occasion he manœuvred the *Experiment* in a way that separated the two French vessels, and then he swooped down and took the schooner. After placing Midshipman David Porter in command of the prize, Stewart went in pursuit of the big brig, but the French captain had seen enough of the whirlwind tactics of the flying "Yankee," and he set studding sails and so escaped.

Since much was said in Congress about the enormous expense of fighting for our rights, here is the reckoning: Our cruisers captured eighty-three ships, carrying 466 guns and 3,150 men. Other ships were sunk and driven

ashore. Several flotillas of picaroons were destroyed. A great number of American merchantmen that had been captured by the enemy were retaken. The pirates and piratical cruisers were driven from the sea; the spoliation of American commerce by the French was brought to an end.

In all this time the French took just one armed American ship—*Le Croyable*—and she was lost because her commander (Lieutenant William Bainbridge) showed too eager gallantry in chasing strange sails, for he got under the guns of two French frigates. To use the only argument that will appeal to those who count a loss of "values" on the stock market as a matter of more importance than a loss of national honor, it was worth while to employ the navy, because by what it captured and by what it actually protected *it paid for itself several times over.*

Yet this financial return was the smallest of the results achieved. For all efforts of the United States to make a lasting treaty failed until after the work of the American cruisers—especially the *Constellation*—had been described in the French papers. Then—on March 30, 1800—Napoleon, First Consul, graciously received the American envoys. *By good fighting the navy saved the nation from war.*

CHAPTER VII

ORIGIN OF THE WAR OF 1812

In every adequate account of the War of 1812 two statements of fact stand forth prominently:

The British aggressions leading to that war grew out of that fear of the "American peril" which first found expression in the Parliament during the Revolution.

Our lack of a navy led, as Washington had foreseen, to "such violation of the rights of the neutral party" as at last made war inevitable.[1]

In connection with what was said in Parliament about the "American Peril," it is to be noted that as soon as the Revolution was ended the American ship owner made strenuous attacks upon those "peculiar resources" the expected "cramping" of which had filled the British Member of Parliament with fear. He began, that is to say, an effort to wrest the supremacy of the seas from the British merchantman, and the extent of his success astonishes the student of history to this day. The registered ships of the United States in 1789 had a tonnage of 123,893. Twelve years later, in 1801, the tonnage had increased, in spite of French spoliations (the French pirates had captured 300 ships in a single year), and in spite of violent British opposition meantime, to 632,907. This

[1] In his eighth Annual Address Washington said: "To secure respect to a neutral flag requires a naval force organized and ready to vindicate it from insult or aggression. This may even prevent the necessity of going to war by discouraging belligerent powers from committing such violation of the rights of the neutral party as may, first or last, leave no other option."

increase was due to the one fact that the American ships and the American crews were the best afloat.

While the "American peril" was thus sweeping the Seven Seas the British war upon Napoleon was begun on April 29, 1803. The British navy was supreme. The French merchant ships were unable to leave port. The trade between the French colonies and France was stopped because, under French law, this trade was confined to French ships. In this emergency Napoleon opened the trade of the colonies to all "neutrals," and the one neutral worth consideration was the United States.

Through the aid of American ships French colonial produce found a ready market, and even supplanted that of the British colonies. This trade still further increased the profits of the American ship owner at the very time when French privateers and the few French warships that were able to leave port were increasing the perils and decreasing the profits of the British ship merchant.

The British merchants and the British colonists appealed to their Government for help, and to that appeal was added one from the British navy. The most interesting British book printed at that period ("War in Disguise," by James Stephens), sets forth the motive of the British naval officer in this matter in a way that is frank and satisfactory. For it draws (pp. 125–127) a picture of a British Admiral growing old and full of honors in the service of his country, who was yet unable "to wrest [from the enemy] the means of comfortably sustaining those honors," because, so long as American ships were allowed to do the work from which the war excluded French ships, he must "look out in vain for any subject of *safe* and uncontested capture." That is to say, while the right of neutrals to the freedom of the sea was conceded the British naval officer would not be able to capture any prizes.

The times were barbarous, and ten years of war previously waged for the suppression of republican institutions on the Continent had intensified the barbarism of England. The British Government promptly found a way to provide the aging admirals with subjects of safe capture, and at the same time strike the "American peril" a staggering blow. British sailors, for time out of mind, had sung "Not a sail but by permission spreads"; the theory that British naval supremacy gave the British Government the full right, as a belligerent, to dictate to all neutrals the terms on which their ships might sail the seas was little doubted in England. In accordance with this theory it had been declared that neutrals should not enter a trade, in time of war, from which they were excluded in time of peace. Thus, American ships having been excluded by French law from the trade between France and her colonies in time of peace, it was declared by the British that such ships should not enter the trade in war time when France was willing to relax her laws. As a "special concession" the British agreed that the American ship might carry goods from the French colonies to the United States and after landing the cargo there, and paying all American duties there on it, it might be reloaded and carried to a French port.

To this British regulation of American carrying trade the American Government submitted, but the superiority of American ships and sailors was so great that American shipping yet competed successfully with the British for the European trade. Thereat the British prize court assumed the right to dictate the terms on which the colonial produce should be landed in the United States—to declare, for instance, that if the American Government allowed the exporter any rebate on the tariff paid when landing the goods, that rebate should warrant condemning the ship. Subjects of "safe capture" for the benefit of aging Brit-

ish admirals were now provided in abundance; for American ships covered the seas, and the British rules were enforced without adequate previous notice.

The British method of carrying on their search for subjects of safe capture is also memorable, for British frigates literally blockaded American ports. Captain Basil Hall, R. N., who, in the spring of 1806, was a midshipman on the frigate *Leander*, described the blockade as his ship maintained it at Sandy Hook ("Fragments of Voyages and Travels"):

"Every morning at daybreak we set about arresting the progress of all the vessels we saw, firing off guns to the right and left to make every ship heave to . . . I have frequently known a dozen, and sometimes a couple dozen, ships losing their fair wind, their tide, and worse than all, their market, for many hours, sometimes the whole day, before our search was completed."

Any informality in the papers, or any chance expression in the private letters (which were all read), exciting the slightest suspicion that French property was on board led to the seizure of the ship, and she was at once sent to Halifax for trial before a court that was financially interested in the condemnation of prizes.

So runs the beginning of the story of the British attacks upon American ships and shipowners. Because the War of 1812 was fought for "Free Trade and Sailors' Rights" with "trade" placed ahead of human rights, the sufferings of the shipowners have been described thus far ahead of "sailors' rights." The sailors shall now be considered.

From the days of Cromwell the British naval captains, when in want of men had sent gangs of sailors ashore, or to the decks of British merchantmen, where they took by force any man found fit for the service. The system seems now utterly inhuman, but in the state of civilization prevailing at the beginning of the nineteenth century it

was commonly practised. After the end of the War of the Revolution the British naval officer found in the practice of impressment a safe and satisfactory way for expressing his contempt and hatred for republican institutions, and incidentally, a way of crippling, more or less, the "American peril." Boarding American ships ostensibly in search of the British subjects often to be found in American crews, the British press gangs jeeringly carried off the best men on board, knowing them, usually, to be American citizens.

Captain A. T. Mahan, whose work on the "War of 1812" is the latest, says the British made "no crude claim" to any "right" to impress American native-born citizens. It is true that they never wrote a public document in which such a claim was made directly, but the extent of the claim of the British may fairly be inferred from their practice. For impressment of American citizens was carried on, with the full knowledge of the British Government, for nearly thirty years. Nor is that all. While they did not openly assert the justice of their practice they insisted that no British citizen who had become a naturalized American should be exempt. Worse yet, they insisted, after a time, that no American citizen should be exempt from impressment unless he had with him, at the time he was seized, a paper called a "protection," signed and sealed by customs officials of the United States, certifying that he was American born. That is to say, the British claimed the right to impress all Americans who through the perils and mishaps of the sea might lose their "protections." The American Government submitted to this claim of the British.

No sooner were "protections" provided for, however, than the British repudiated them on the plea that all American customs officials were in the habit of issuing the papers to British citizens for the sake of the fees exacted;

incidentally it was declared that the whole list of American customs officials were professional perjurers. The impressing of American seamen went on merrily and, when impressed, the American was compelled to serve without pay unless he condoned the crime by "voluntarily" enlisting. To escape from his bondage the American sailor was obliged to secure evidence of his birth that would be satisfactory to the British Admiralty, and this evidence had to be transmitted through the American Secretary of State to London.

Moreover, when the impressed American had the good luck to run away from the ship on which he was held he was proclaimed a "deserter," and the claim that he was a deserter was enforced with broadsides. In one case where Americans, admitted to be Americans, were retaken after "desertion" they were flogged with 500 blows each from the boatswain's cat—a punishment little short of death by torture.

In following the custom of impressing American seamen the British officers often boarded American ships at sea and took away so many men that the ships were left dangerously short-handed. In fact some ships thus robbed failed to reach port. The impressment of their crews amounted to murder. Impressment often amounted to murder, too, when some sturdy American, asserting his rights, refused to do duty. For some of those patriots were shipped off to serve on the coasts of Africa and India, where they died of fevers. Others were tortured under the lash. Others were chained in the bilge-water of the lower hold and fed on even less and worse food than was served to the underfed crew.

While it is true that in a few cases Americans succeeded in securing evidence of their nativity that satisfied the Admiralty the release came only after two or three years of service without pay; and it is not to be forgotten that

not one British officer was ever so much as reprimanded for enslaving these men who were admitted to be Americans.

Finally, the fact that the British stubbornly refused, when making the treaty of peace after the war, to consider any concession in the matter of impressing Americans, seems to have some bearing on the character of the "Claim"—whether "crude" or not—which they had made theretofore.

The actual number of American sailors impressed is, of course, a matter of no moment in a discussion of the right of the practice. But since the number affected the issue it may be noted that, in replying to the request of Congress for information in the matter, Mr. Madison reported, under date of March 5, 1806, that *papers filed in his office* showed that 2,273 had been impressed since the beginning of the war between England and Napoleon. It was admitted in Parliament after the fighting began that more than 3,000 Americans were in the navy. Of course that was but a fraction of the number actually impressed, for the friends and relatives of foremast hands were usually too poor or ignorant to make an appeal to the American Secretary of State. It is estimated that, first and last, as many as 20,000 Americans were thus enslaved.

The nearest approach to an adequate apology for the practice that one could find in British literature, until recent years, is the assertion that Great Britain was fighting the Great Oppressor of the World; it was a war for Human Liberty; that she was in straits where she could man her ships only by impressment; that Americans were so much like Englishmen in speech and appearance that mistakes were really unavoidable. Captain Mahan, in his "War of 1812" (*Scribner's Magazine*, January, 1904), supports that British view, as proclaimed at the period of the war. He says: "It may be said that Great Britain could have desisted. She could not." The *London Spec-*

tator, however (December 23, 1905), in reviewing the work of this American naval captain, says emphatically, if unkindly:

"While we agree [with Mahan] that many of the measures we took were forced upon us by that necessity which knows no law, *impressment from foreign ships was not one of them.*"

It is seen now that the British sailors left their ships not because they lacked patriotism but because of the conditions in the British service that created the bloody mutinies of 1797. Starvation, ill-treatment not easily described and scant wages drove British seamen to serve under a flag they despised (they called it in derision the "gridiron" flag). For under that flag they received good pay and ample food. The concern which the Congress of the Revolution had shown in connection with the pudding bags was bearing fruit. By raising the pay and giving a satisfactory ration the British could have filled their ships. The Earl of Galloway, in the House of Lords, on May 13, 1813, in referring to "the propensity of our seamen to desert," said that this "propensity" might be "obviated by an increase of petty officers, and by *more liberal remuneration.*" (Annual Reg.) No one in the House disputed his assertion.

Impressment was preferred through parsimony chiefly; it would have cost some money to give the seamen enough to eat, with fair pay.

This is not to scold the British for what they did. Ever since the days when danger taught primitive man to walk erect the evolution of the race has been the result of successful conflicts with aggressive and domineering enemies. The British then taught the Americans a needed lesson—if only we might fully understand and remember it.

We now come to the attitude of the American people while subject to these outrages and aggressions. When

the war upon Napoleon began, Thomas Jefferson was President of the United States. He had seen in the work of President Adams an effective method of ending such troubles. He had also read a report to the House of Representatives, written by Secretary of the Navy Stoddert, under date of January 12, 1801, which said:

"When the United States own twelve ships of seventy-four guns, and double the number of strong frigates . . . confidence may be indulged that we may then avoid those wars in which we have no interest, and without submitting to be plundered."

The experience of the American people ever since the Declaration of Independence had demonstrated that whatever the merits of other methods of dealing with the spoilers might possibly be, it was certain that good fighting would serve. But Mr. Jefferson, on taking office, had a new scheme in mind, and to help him carry it out he called to his cabinet James Madison and Albert Gallatin, the two men who had, as members of the House, most effectively opposed the building of a navy.

Jefferson, in his "Virginia Notes" (p. 258), had said that "the sea is the field on which we should meet an European enemy," and he even suggested a fleet of eighteen ships-of-the-line and twelve frigates as a force adequate to American needs. His new policy was never set forth in public documents, but it was very fully described in private letters. Thus in a letter to Thomas Paine he said:

"Determined as we are to avoid, if possible, wasting the energies of our people in war and destruction, we shall avoid implicating ourselves with the Powers of Europe, even in support of principles which we mean to pursue. We believe we can enforce these principles as to ourselves by peaceable means."

To a celebrated Pennsylvania peacemaker, Dr. Logan,

he explained how he was to use peaceable means to compel the compliance of foreign nations. He said:

"Our commerce is so valuable to them that they will be glad to purchase it, when the only price we ask is to do us justice. I believe that we have in our own hands the means of peaceable coercion; and that the moment they see our Government so united as that we can make use of it, they will for their own interest be disposed to do us justice."

In the year that Jefferson was inaugurated the exports of the United States amounted to $94,115,925, while the imports reached the sum of $111,363,511. Jefferson believed that the profits of the foreign peoples on this trade—particularly the profits of the manufacturers who produced our imports—were so great that we had only to withdraw our trade from an aggressing nation to compel it to do us justice.

An appeal to trade "interest"—bluntly, an appeal to greed—was Jefferson's means of "peaceable coercion." It was a policy particularly pleasing to those American Congressmen who had voted to pay blackmail—an annual tribute to the African pirates rather than build a navy.

Mr. Jefferson intended to coerce, but never with guns afloat. "That a navy caused more ills than it prevented or corrected was one of the deepest convictions that underlay the policy of Mr. Jefferson" after he became President. "Sound principles," said he, "will not justify our taxing the industries of our fellow-citizens to accumulate treasures for wars to happen we know not when." (Quoted by H. Adams, "History of the United States," vol. I, p. 222.)

To avoid, as far as possible, taxing the industry of his fellow citizens for the support of a navy Jefferson laid up five of the frigates-in-ordinary at Washington. The work on six ships-of-the-line, which Congress had authorized, was suspended. Mr. Adams had expended $3,448,716 on

the navy in 1800. In 1802 Mr. Jefferson expended but $915,562. To reduce naval expenditures still further he proposed in his message, dated December 15, 1802, "to add to our navy-yard here a dock within which our present vessels may be laid up dry and under cover from the sun." "Beautiful and appropriate drawings of the dock and its locks" were laid before Congress, and nothing but the size of the estimated cost prevented Congress adopting the plan of laying up our navy "dry and under cover from the sun" at a time when British frigates were plundering American ships and impressing native-born American seamen in American waters at Sandy Hook.

This is not to doubt Mr. Jefferson's sincerity of purpose. He intended to promote peace and the financial growth of the country. First of all he intended to pay the public debt, and in this he succeeded astonishingly well. In 1801 the debt amounted to $83,038,051. Just before the War of 1812 it had been reduced, under the Jeffersonian policy, which Madison continued, to $45,209,738.

What with the blockading of New York and the impressment of American seamen, the country was aroused to a pitch where Jefferson saw a wished-for opportunity to bring into use his one sure weapon—"peaceable coercion"—for compelling the oppressor to do us justice. He accordingly instructed Congress to pass the non-intercourse bill that became a law April 18, 1806. The importation of beer, millinery goods, playing cards and some other things of British manufacture was absolutely prohibited "from and after the 15th day of November next."

So confident was Mr. Jefferson in the success of "peaceable coercion" that he wrote:

"We begin to broach the idea that we consider the whole Gulf Stream as our waters, in which hostilities are to be frowned on at present, and prohibited" later. "We shall never permit another privateer to cruise within it," he added.

It has been asserted that the non-intercourse law was "vindictive retaliation." John Randolph, who, although the greatest of American blatherskites, saw some things clearly, said it was "a dose of chicken broth to be taken nine months hence."

Jefferson's "dose of chicken broth" was mixed to cure all ills. A week after it was signed the frigate *Leander* was still at Sandy Hook firing off guns to the right and left as before. In the course of the day, while firing on a coaster, the shot killed the coaster's master. For this murder the captain of the *Leander* was recalled—and sent to a more comfortable station.

As an official reply to Jefferson's effort at "peaceable coercion," the British proclaimed a paper blockade of the coast of Europe from Brest to the Elbe, though it should be said that the measure was decided on while yet non-intercourse was under discussion in Congress. The coast thus "blockaded" contained the ports most frequented by American shipping, but if forces had been stationed to make an actual blockade the United States would have had no cause of complaint. The injury done American shipping was found in the confiscation of ships for the violation of a blockade that did not exist. The position then assumed by the American Government in regard to paper blockades has now no firmer supporter than the British nation, and British writers on international law admit that in the matter of the obligations of neutrals the United States "represented by far the most advanced existing opinions." But no American protest then availed.

This adoption of the scheme of paper blockades (May 16, 1806) led Napoleon to issue his "Berlin Decree" (November 21, 1806). Of the general attitude of Napoleon toward the United States it need only be said here that it was imperious and insulting, and that he did what he could

to rob the people that were counting their interest more than their honor. It was at one time suggested in Congress that the United States should declare war against both England and France, and that ought to have been done.

The Berlin Decree stated the undisputable fact that the blockade declared by the British was designed to destroy all neutral commerce for the benefit of British shipping and commerce. From this Napoleon argued that whoever had any part in British commerce was but aiding the nefarious British plan. He therefore decreed that the British Islands were in a state of blockade; all intercourse with these islands was prohibited; all merchandise coming from them was declared good prize; it was ordered that no ship coming from the British Islands should be allowed to enter any continental port.

The American people were now literally between the devil and the deep sea, if that expression may be allowed, and that, too, when they had not yet learned that "when you clinch with the devil you must use your claws." Yet worse was to come. Two American commissioners had been negotiating a treaty with the British when the Berlin Decree was issued. The treaty was all ready for signatures when a copy of the decree reached London. Thereupon the British negotiators declared they would not sign the treaty "unless our Government should engage to *support* its rights against the measures of France" ("Foreign Relations," vol. III, p. 147). They demanded that the United States declare war on France as the price of the treaty, and it was a treaty that ignored impressment. The treaty was eventually forwarded to Washington, where it was laid aside. Manifestly the refusal to buy her playing cards and beer had not yet peaceably coerced Great Britain to any extent.

The refusal to make a definite treaty was followed by

an Order in Council, dated January 7, 1807, forbidding to neutrals all participation in the continental coasting trade as far south and east as Italy. An American ship that found a poor market in one port was confiscated if she attempted to go to another.

Then came the attack on the frigate *Chesapeake*. In shipping a crew at Norfolk for a voyage to Europe, early in 1807, four of the men secured were claimed by British naval officers as deserters from the British ships that were at that time lying in the Chesapeake Bay for the purpose of examining all shipping, as the *Leopard* had done at Sandy Hook. That the four had fled from British ships is undisputed. They were the kind of deserters already mentioned—impressed American seamen seeking liberty. Three of them were known on all hands to be Americans born; it is possible that the fourth was British born. The three were also negroes, a fact of interest in connection with the oft-repeated British assertion that it was impossible to tell an American from an Englishman, and that the British made "no crude claim to impress American-born citizens." This case was not singular, either, for red Indians were impressed as native-born Englishmen!

When a demand for the "deserters" was refused the vice-admiral commanding the station ordered his ships to take them from the *Chesapeake* by force whenever they should find her at sea.

The *Chesapeake* sailed early on June 22, 1807, and when well off shore she found the British frigate *Leopard* awaiting her. The *Leopard* demanded the four men. Captain James Barron, commanding the *Chesapeake*, refused, but did not at once order his men to quarters. When he did send them there he told them to go quietly, so that the British should not learn what they were doing. The gun-deck was lumbered up with all sorts of baggage

and stores. The guns were not in order. Many of the guns had been supplied with rammers too large for the bore. There were no matches for firing the guns. The blight of "peaceable coercion" was over the whole ship and her crew. While Barron fumbled, the British opened fire—at 4:30 o'clock—and continued it for fifteen minutes, when Barron hauled down the flag. The four "deserters" were then carried to Halifax, where they were convicted of the crime of deserting. The three Americans known to be Americans received 500 lashes; the one who may have been British-born was hanged. The *Chesapeake* had three men killed and eighteen wounded. She was somewhat, but not much, cut up by the *Leopard's* safe target practice.

President Jefferson at once issued a proclamation ordering all British ships from American waters and forbidding them to enter again. A similar measure of "vindictive retaliation" was issued by the Mayor of Norfolk, who forbade his people to hold any communication with the British ships (by the way, the ships ignored the President's proclamation), and when the British senior captain threatened to take supplies by force, all the mounted militia of the region were called out.

Jefferson, bending to the blast of "popular clamor," talked much of war and summoned an extra session of Congress. Then, on December 18, in a message that is, perhaps, the most remarkable document in the American archives, he recommended that full revenge be taken for the intolerable outrage upon the honor of the nation—by laying an embargo on all American shipping! At one stroke *all British profit* on American commerce—the very last cent—was to be cut off. Now he would demonstrate that our "commerce is so valuable to them that they will be glad to purchase it when the only price we ask is to do us justice."

Following this a bill was introduced to authorize the

President to sink "blocks"—worthless ship hulls—in a line across the Hudson to prevent British insults to New York. It was also proposed to stretch a chain across the Narrows for the same purpose. The building of some gunboats—rowboats fit to carry one 24-pounder each—was authorized ostensibly as an extreme war measure, but really because it was well known to Jefferson that such boats were worthless for any war purpose.

But more sorrowful than these bills were the arguments used to resist those who called for war. "Had not Denmark a navy?" asked Representative Fisk. "What became of it? It fell . . . and that will be the fate of our navy, if we erect one." Burwell called attention to the fact that England's naval "resources were infinitely beyond those of our infant country." John Randolph said that the navy had been "for years a moth on the public purse." The mere sight of a member of the marine corps made his gorge rise, and as for resisting the British by means of the navy, "a straight-jacket and depletion" were the only remedies for one wild enough to suggest it. Smilie, who had not always opposed a naval force, said that "prudence required a temperate course." It was even asserted that members of the House ought to be moderate in their choice of words lest the British Minister of Foreign Affairs be offended to a point where "he would put forth his strength and make us feel it."

With few exceptions the members of Congress diligently cultivated the fears—the cowardice of the nation. In all that weary period there was but one gleam of light.

"Sir!" said Josiah Quincy, of Massachusetts, with his lip curling in scorn, "if I can help it the old women of this country shall not be frightened by the talk of war any longer. I have been a close observer of what has been done and said by the majority of this House, and I am convinced that no insult, however gross, could force

this majority into the declaration of war. To use a strong but common expression, it could not be kicked into such a declaration."

The Embargo Act became a law on December 22, 1807.

The nation was then young, and the American people were developing their national ideals. It was at this critical period that Congress "counted their interest more than their honor."

It is asserted by the apologist for the British aggressions that "the British Government at once disowned" the assault upon the *Chesapeake*. The assertion is a half truth. On August 3 Minister Canning wrote to Monroe saying that "His Majesty neither does nor has at any time maintained the pretension of a right to search ships of war in the national service of any State for *deserters*." He thereby asserted that the men taken from the *Chesapeake* were deserters, at least. He had previously asked Monroe if the "deserters" were Americans or British, and had maintained that their nationality was a matter of importance. He did recall Vice-Admiral Berkeley, but a better command was soon given him. More than that the British positively refused to do, unless Jefferson would first withdraw his proclamation depriving British ships of the right of using American ports.

The real attitude of the British Government on this matter is seen in the editorials of the Government newspapers. In them there was no whine about "imminence of national peril" and England's death struggle for the liberty of the world. Said the *Morning Post:*

"A war of a very few months, without creating to us the expense of a single additional ship, would be sufficient to convince her [America] of her folly by a necessary chastisement of her insolence and audacity." This was the real attitude of the British, and it was only when it was seen, in 1811, that the American people would fight at last, that a

full disavowal of the *Chesapeake* affair was made by a return of the "deserters" to the deck of the assaulted ship.

While the American Congress talked about embargo and the impossibility of meeting Great Britain upon the high seas the British Government, by Orders in Council dated November 11, 1807, extended the paper blockade throughout the world. Every port from which British ships were excluded by Napoleon, even in the colonies, was declared "blockaded" to neutral ships. While the apologist for the British speaks of this as a "measure of just and necessary retaliation" for the Berlin Decree, the order itself shows that it was not either a matter of retaliation or for keeping West India products out of the realms of Napoleon. For it was expressly provided in the order that American ships might continue to trade to the forbidden ports if they would first call at an English port, land their cargoes, pay certain specified duties, procure a permit called a license, and then reship and get away on their voyage. The British sailor had been singing "No sail but by permission spreads." The British Government now said "no trade *except through Great Britain.*"

And that is to say that when it was seen that the American ships were able to carry on trade, in spite of all the ills imposed theretofore by British jealousy, this last Order in Council was devised to compel the triumphant "Yankee" shipowner to give up a share of his profits. In fact the members of the British Government in time openly avowed that the object was a mere grab, a trick of commerce for which war gave opportunity, and not a war measure at all. In a debate in Parliament, March 3, 1812, Spencer Percival frankly declared:

"The object of the Orders in Council was not to destroy the trade of the Continent, but to force the Continent to trade with us."

Lord Erskine, being of the opposition, said of the Orders as a matter of "retaliation":

"It is, indeed, quite astonishing to hear the word 'retaliation' twisted and perverted in a manner equally repugnant to grammar and common sense. . . . It is a new application of the term, that if A strike me, I may *retaliate* by striking B. I cannot, my Lords, conceive of anything more preposterous."

Unbelievable as it now seems, it was at the moment when the British were making this last stroke for levying tribute on American commerce that the American Congress passed the embargo act. During the ensuing year —1807 and 1808—the embargo was so rigorously enforced that American ships disappeared entirely from the ports of Europe.

The time for which President Jefferson had looked—the time when the British merchant and manufacturer should be wholly deprived of the profits on the American trade—had come. England was now to become glad to buy back that trade, especially as the only price we asked was that she do us justice! But when the "peaceable coercionists" looked eagerly for offers to "dicker" for this trade, they saw nothing but looks of contempt. And the British contempt was shared by every other people in Europe. The French Minister to the United States, in a letter dated September 4, 1807, spoke feelingly of "the sentiments of fear and servile deference with which the inhabitants of the American Union are penetrated." He added that the Americans were "a people that conceives no idea of glory, of grandeur, of justice . . . and that is disposed to suffer every kind of humiliation provided it can satisfy its sordid avarice." (Quoted by Henry Adams, "History of the United States," vol. IV, p. 149.)

But while the work of "peaceable coercion" was thus leading the American Nation to a depth of degradation

not now quite comprehensible, the people—they whom Lincoln trusted—were slowly coming to an understanding of the conditions that prevailed. In spite of the misinformation of party newspapers, and of the speeches in, and the acts of, Congress deliberately made with the intention of deceiving, the truth became known. Once the facts were fully known the people decided for themselves what course to pursue; and they made the decision without counting their interest.

For the attitude of the people in ignoring "interest" at the last we may thank the British naval officers, for it was the impressment of American citizens that led to it. Wives and children and aged parents of impressed Americans were found in every port. Congressmen ignored them, but their neighbors, and the people of the countryside round about, could not and would not. What the honest indignation of the "jingoes" in Congress could not accomplish, the tears of woman did do. And those tears still reach the heart of *every* patriot.

The whisperings of voters who had for years cowered under the party lash finally changed to a growl that was unmistakable. The one fact in the history of this whole period, outside of the deeds of our naval men, that can now arouse the enthusiasm of a patriot is this, that at a moment when everybody knew that the nation was wholly unprepared for war—when the ships in the British navy numbered 1,042 and those in the American 17; when every shivering fibre of "interest" said truthfully that great losses were inevitable, and the utter destruction of the nation was really to be feared—it was then, in the face of supreme danger, that the American people brushed aside every sordid appeal and demanded a war for the vindication of Right.

The last act of "peaceable coercion" by self-strangulation was passed by Congress on March 1, 1809, and

amended in June. It provided that for a specified period no trade should be carried on between the United States and either England or France. It was provided also that in case either party to the offensive measures should relent, after the expiration of the limit, the embargo should be revived against the unrelenting power. By deliberate falsehood Napoleon led the Administration, Madison being then President, to believe for a time that his decrees had been revoked, and Madison proclaimed that commerce with Great Britain must cease on February 2, 1811.

In answer to this a British squadron once more appeared off New York, and the President, driven on by the war party, ordered an American squadron to sea to protect the flag. The time when the American people would find themselves was at hand.

CHAPTER VIII

LEARNING THE ART OF NAVAL WARFARE

Before describing the work of the navy in the War of 1812 it is important to tell how it happened that we had a navy after Jefferson had declared in his second annual message a wish to build a dock at Washington "within which our present vessels may be laid up dry and under cover from the sun." Fortunately for the navy, and therefore most fortunately for the country, the Barbary pirates began to make trouble. The Bashaw of Tripoli learned that the tribute paid him amounted to but little, if any, more than what was given to a minister of the court of Tunis, the minister having received $40,000, "besides presents." As the American representative at Tripoli was unable to increase the tribute war was declared against the United States on May 14, 1801. The Dey of Tunis, not being satisfied with the tribute paid him according to treaty, demanded 10,000 stand of arms at about this time under penalty of war. In May, 1800, the American warship *George Washington* arrived in Algiers with the annual tribute due to the Dey. When the tribute had been delivered, the Dey ordered the *Washington*, as the ship of a vassal nation, to carry his tribute to the Sultan of Turkey, of whom he was a vassal, and the *Washington* was obliged to do it. And she was obliged to fly the Algerine flag above the American while on the voyage.

The Tripolitans, having declared war, it was necessary to send a squadron to the Mediterranean or else abandon all commerce in that region, for there was no way of ap-

plying "peaceable coercion" to the Bashaw. Fifteen of the vessels that had been employed in the war with France had been retained in the navy, and of these the frigates *President, Philadelphia* and *Essex*, and the schooner *Enterprise* were sent to overawe the pirates. Two Tripolitan corsairs were found at Gibraltar and effectually blockaded there. On August 1, 1801, the *Enterprise* fell in with the corsair *Tripoli*. The pirate fought such a desperate battle that it was only after he had lost twenty men killed and thirty wounded, out of a crew of eighty, that he surrendered. For gallant conduct in this battle Lieutenant Sterett, commanding the *Enterprise*, was so highly praised by the people of his country that Congress felt obliged to vote him a sword.

When it came to an attack upon Tripoli, however, it was found that the ships lacked the necessary force. We had no ships-of-the-line, and nothing could be done beyond maintaining a blockade. Moreover, the frigates were of too deep draught for such work and, as the pirates could not be left free without the destruction of all American commerce in that sea, Congress was induced to build two brigs, the *Siren* and *Argus*, that mounted sixteen 24-pounder carronades and two long 12-pounders, and the schooners *Nautilus* and *Vixen*, mounting twelve 18-pound carronades and two long 6-pounders. This was done in 1803. In the course of this year (October 30) the frigate *Philadelphia* was lost. Under Captain William Bainbridge she was chasing a corsair among the reefs off Tripoli when she ran aground and could not be extricated. Here the Tripolitans boarded her, making her entire crew of 315 men, all told, prisoners. She was then floated and moored in the harbor close under the guns of the forts. A court-martial decided that "Captain William Bainbridge acted with fortitude and conduct in the loss of his ship . . . and that no degree of censure should attach itself to him."

A fine ship was lost from our little navy and her crew were enslaved. It was an appalling accident, but it gave some men of the navy opportunity for a deed that strengthened the grip of all naval men upon the hearts of their countrymen. In December Bainbridge sent a message to the blockading squadron suggesting that an expedition be sent into the harbor to destroy the *Philadelphia.*

No more dangerous expedition, apparently, had ever been proposed to American seamen. The *Philadelphia* was moored within range of a hundred guns, and she was surrounded by well-armed and well-manned gunboats. Her crew far outnumbered any volunteer crew that could be sent against her. But when the matter was proposed in the blockading squadron there was instantly a strong competition among all the available officers for the honor of going in. Stephen Decatur, Jr., won. A little ketch had been captured. Under Decatur a crew that numbered eighty men was selected from the host of volunteers. Among them were Lieutenant James Lawrence and Midshipman Thomas Macdonough.

On the night of February 16, 1804, the little ketch appeared off Tripoli. She was piloted by a man who knew the harbor and talked the Tripolitan language. In her hold were quantities of combustibles and her crew were under such an order as that which inspired the men who stormed Stony Point under "Mad" Anthony Wayne—they were told to use cold steel only. Near midnight, as the ketch drifted slowly under the bows of the *Philadelphia,* a sentinel hailed her. The pilot replied that the ketch was a merchantman from Malta, and that, having lost her anchors in a gale, he wanted to make fast to the frigate until morning. Then he began to give a list of goods with which he said the ketch was loaded, and that proved so attractive to every barbarian within hearing that the desired permission was given. For, with the exception of

half a dozen men well disguised, the crew of the ketch were stowed well out of sight. Just then a breeze took the ketch aback, and she began drifting away; but Decatur, with not a tremor in his voice, sent two men in a yawl with a line to the frigate's fore chains. With a line to the frigate the crew of the ketch began hauling in and warping her to the frigate's side, but while yet far away a pirate, who was leaning out from a port, saw some of her crew that were in uniform, and began to shout:

"Americanos! Americanos!"

At that another pirate cut the rope that connected the ketch to the frigate, but before he had done this the American seamen had given a pull that brought their vessel alongside, and then, shouting "Boarders away!" Decatur leaped into the *Philadelphia's* rigging. Cutlasses in hand his men swarmed over the rail, and in through the ports. On deck they formed in squads and charged fore and aft, hewing down all opposition. Not a word did they utter and the only sounds they made were the stroke and thud of steel, while the pirates fell to the deck or leaped in wild haste into the sea. Within ten minutes Decatur stood upon the quarter-deck, master for the moment of a frigate.

Then swiftly, but not hurriedly, the combustibles were passed up from the ketch, placed in nooks previously designated and fired. So thoroughly was the work done that the party that had been sent to the berth-deck with difficulty escaped the flames that had been kindled above. In twenty-five minutes from the moment when the ketch arrived Decatur returned to her, leaving the frigate doomed beyond hope. His crew had all escaped injury of every kind so far, but now new dangers surrounded them. The flames might at any moment reach the magazine and hurl the *Philadelphia* in fragments upon them, while every pirate gun within range was now aimed and fired at them

by the light of the flames they had kindled. The enemy's shot splashed water over them as if it were spray from a growing surf while they bent to their oars, and as time passed even the guns of the *Philadelphia*, heated by the fire, began to throw shot at them.

And yet in the midst of the infernal fire that roared about them that crew, seeing that their work was well done, ceased rowing and gave three cheers. Not a man was lost in the expedition. Decatur was promoted to the rank of Captain, and Congress gave him a sword.

A little later it was determined to try and destroy the shipping in the harbor of Tripoli by exploding a floating mine in the midst of the anchorage. The ketch with which Decatur had destroyed the *Philadelphia*, and which had been renamed the *Intrepia*, was loaded with a hundred barrels of powder and an immense quantity of projectiles. Master Commandant Richard Somers was selected to command this expedition, and his lieutenant was Henry Longfellow, an uncle of the poet. With them went Midshipman Joseph Israel as a stowaway, and ten sailors selected from a host of volunteers.

On the night of September 4, 1804, when a misty fog hung low over the waters, Somers headed into the harbor. The men of the squadron watched while the little ketch faded slowly into the fog, and then waited in painful silence for signal or sound to tell what she was doing. Finally a light that was travelling in a waving line, as if a man were running along the deck with it, was seen where the ketch was supposed to be. It disappeared almost as soon as seen, but the next instant a mighty flame shot high in air, burning shells were hurled far through the night, followed by a heavy shock and a deafening roar. The ketch had grounded on a reef, and while held there was attacked by three gunboats. And when the pirates, in overwhelming numbers, came swarming over her rail, Somers fired the

powder in her hold. He had declared that he would not be taken alive, and he kept his word.

These old tales of the navy are memorable chiefly because they show how the American sailors carried themselves, and how they were trained in the arts of war in the days when the Administration was anxious to build a dock at Washington in which to lay up all our naval vessels, "dry and under cover from the sun." While the Administration frowned; while John Randolph, the leading orator of Congress, was saying that the mere sight of a marine made his gorge rise; in spite of the fact the Bashaw received tribute amounting to $60,000 when he finally made peace; the men of the navy fought well and the people applauded their deeds.

CHAPTER IX

THE DECISIVE BATTLE OF THE WAR OF 1812

War was declared on June 18, 1812. President Madison, who had supposed that sending our frigates to the West Indies in 1798 would make the French pirates more acrimonious, was determined to keep our navy under the protecting guns of our forts until the militia should sweep the British out of Canada, but Captain William Bainbridge and Captain Charles Stewart, by an indignant protest, stiffened his limp backbone so far that permission for some little naval effort was obtained. Under this permission the *Constitution* sailed from the Chesapeake for New York, on July 12, 1812, under Captain Isaac Hull.

Late in the afternoon on July 17, when off Barnegat, on the New Jersey coast, the *Constitution* met a British squadron of four frigates and a 64-gun liner. One of the frigates was the *Shannon*, Captain P. B. V. Broke, that was to astonish an American crew, some time later, while another was the *Guerrière*, Captain James Richard Dacres, with which the *Constitution* was to meet again under different circumstances.

The British squadron made sail in chase. The weather was like that in which so many races for the America's cup have been sailed—there were light and variable breezes, with dead calms between. By every art of the seaman (and no man knew the sailor arts better than Captain Hull) the *Constitution* was coaxed along. Her sails were trimmed to the faintest airs, they were stretched till the bolt ropes creaked and they were wet down to make sure

that not a breath escaped them. While the wind served, though never so faint, the *Constitution* gained. When the zephyrs failed the small boats were used for towing and, at the suggestion of Lieutenant Charles Morris, kedge anchors, with lines attached, were carried out and dropped a half mile ahead. By hauling in on the lines the ship was warped ahead rapidly. But the enemy proved good imitators—they got out boats and kedges, and because they had the crews of a squadron to concentrate on two frigates they were able to work up on the *Constitution* during the dead calms.

For more than forty-eight hours the men of the *Constitution* handled the braces, rowed the boats and hauled in the kedge lines. They slept on deck a few moments at a stretch when they might, and ate food that was brought by the cooks to them as they stood at the ropes. The resourcefulness and grip of that crew give heart to the patriot to this day.

During the afternoon of the second day, the 19th, the breeze slowly hardened and then at 7 o'clock a heavy rain-squall came. Hull held fast until the squall was upon him and then let go all and shortened sail as if he feared the ship would be dismasted. Seeing such haste the captains of the other ships shortened sail without waiting for the squall to reach them. A moment later, when the *Constitution* was well enshrouded by the murk of the squall, Captain Hull made sail again and stood away with his sails rap full and the old ship logging eleven knots. That Hull was a better seaman than any in the British squadron was acknowledged the next morning. Though several of the British ships had the *Constitution* within view from their royal yards they abandoned the chase.

The *Constitution* arrived at Boston on July 26. She anchored in the outer harbor. Hull foresaw that the narrow margin by which he had escaped the British would

turn the heart of the President to water once more, and that orders would be sent to keep the *Constitution* in port. Hoping against hope for an opportunity to strike one blow for the flag—caring nothing for the fact that the British had at that time in commission 102 ships-of-the-line besides 482 frigates and smaller vessels, and that Halifax was the home port of the ships on the American station—Hull determined to sail without orders, though he knew that if he lost the ship under such circumstances he might be shot.

The *Constitution* sailed from Boston on August 2, and went cruising away through the waters haunted by the Halifax ships. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon of the 19th, when about 800 miles east of Boston, the British frigate *Guerrière*, Captain James Richard Dacres, was seen alee. The decisive battle of the War of 1812 was at hand.

It was a cloudy day, with the wind from the northwest. The *Constitution* squared away for the enemy, shortening sail the while. The *Guerrière* prepared for the battle in like manner and laid her main to the mast to wait for the *Constitution*.

Before the ships were within range the *Guerrière* began to wear around first one way and then the other, firing a broadside each time. The *Constitution* replied with a few guns, but it was all a waste of ammunition because not a shot reached home on either side. During all this time, however, the *Constitution* was drawing nearer and at 6 o'clock the *Guerrière* squared away before the wind in a way that was a plain challenge to a combat yard-arm to yard-arm.

At that Hull made sail and as the *Constitution* swept down within pistol range (say the breadth of a country road), off the *Guerrière's* port beam, the British crew began to cheer and work their guns.

On the *Constitution* the sailors stood at their posts erect

and silent, but manifestly impatient. They were so eager to return the fire, especially after a shot from the *Guerrière* happened to strike the bulwarks and kill two men, that Lieutenant Morris went to the Captain three times and asked permission to fire. But Hull, with his eyes on the enemy, refused, while the *Constitution* forged ahead until every gun in her broadside would bear.) Then he stooped until he split his knee breeches from waist band to buckle, leaped erect and shouted,

"Now boys, pour it into them!"

The broadside sounded like a single explosion, and the crash of the shot piercing the plank and timbers of the *Guerrière* came back like an echo. The gunners of the *Constitution* had *aimed* their guns—they had aimed to avenge the wrongs that had been inflicted on 20,000 Americans by British press gangs, and every shot struck home. So plainly seen was the havoc wrought by the broadside that Hull exclaimed exultingly:

"By ——, that vessel is ours!"

It was so. In a few minutes the mizzen mast of the *Guerrière* fell into the sea where it acted as a drag, bringing her head around to the wind. The *Constitution* ranged ahead and, luffing across her bows, raked her. Then turning back, the *Constitution* raked her again. This time the *Constitution* was so close that she fouled the *Guerrière's* bow, and Lieutenant Morris, seeing a loose rope hanging from the *Guerrière's* bowsprit, used it to lash the two vessels together, bow to stern.

The British broadside guns would not now bear, but they worked their bow chasers with such good effect that the splintered woodwork of the *Constitution's* cabin was set afire. Then Captain Dacres called his men to board the *Constitution*, and they obeyed with cheers, but when Dacres saw the host of Yankees awaiting him he changed his mind. It was while the crews were thus massed that

the chief part of the losses on the *Constitution* were suffered. Lieutenant William Bush of the marines was shot dead; Lieutenant Morris and Master John C. Alwyn were wounded. Captain Dacres of the *Guerrière* was also wounded at this time.

Then the rope holding the two ships together broke and as they were drifting apart the foremast and mainmast of the *Guerrière* fell over the rail. The *Guerrière* was left a mastless hulk in the trough of the sea with the muzzles of her guns dipping into the waves at every roll. She had received thirty shot through her hull at points far below the water line ("five sheets of copper down"), besides many in the hull at points higher up. She was not only helpless, but sinking. It was just 6:22. After replacing a few ropes that had been cut the *Constitution* was as fit for battle as when she left Boston. Seeing this, the *Guerrière* at 7 o'clock hauled down her flag.

Nearly two hours had elapsed between the firing of the first gun and the last, but the fighting—the actual work of destruction—was all done "in the short space of 30 minutes" (Hull's report). The *Guerrière* was burned next morning.

The *Guerrière* had twenty-three men killed and mortally wounded and fifty-six more or less seriously hurt. The *Constitution* lost seven killed and seven wounded. The *Constitution's* crew numbered 456, that of the *Guerrière* 272, not counting ten American citizens that had been impressed and were not required to fight. The *Constitution* was able to fire twenty-seven guns in a broadside, the *Guerrière* twenty-five. The *Constitution's* maindeck battery consisted of 24-pounders and the *Guerrière's* of 18-pounders.

After a century of consideration of this battle everyone now sees the absurdity of an appeal to a mathematical calculation, such as the British made in other days, to learn

whether the crew of the *Constitution* or the *Guerrière* were the better men-o'-warsmen. It was not the size or the number of the *Constitution's* guns, or the number of her crew, that gave her the victory. It was the number of her shot that struck home. If the crews could have changed ships, the Americans, being the better marksmen, would yet have won the battle.

The effect of the battle upon the American people was marvellous. The flames of the *Constitution's* guns burned away the prejudices and false doctrines that had been so carefully cultivated for more than ten years. Hull had been obliged to steal away to sea in the "awful stillness of a New-England Sabbath morning" because the Government was afraid to trust a naval crew beyond the protecting guns of forts. The idea of our naval ships being able to meet those of Great Britain seemed too ludicrous for serious argument!

The *Constitution* changed all that. It did more. The American Government—even Henry Clay, leader of the war party in Congress—had looked to the valorous militia to sweep the British out of Canada. But the newspapers, which told the people of the *Constitution's* victory, told in other columns how General William Hull had surrendered Detroit to an inferior force of invading British. Imagine the effect upon the nation if Commodore Rodgers, who had sailed some time before, with a small American squadron, had come into Boston with his story of failure to add to the story of General Hull's surrender, and it will be seen that the *Constitution* had not only won a victory but a most timely victory—a victory that was imperatively needed.

Observe further that the whole War of 1812 as fought on land was a failure throughout. The good fighting at the Niagara River accomplished little or nothing, and the battle of New Orleans was fought after the treaty of peace

was signed. The battle between the *Constitution* and the *Guerrière* was the important and even the decisive battle of that war because through it the American sailor received permission to continue fighting for the flag, and because the victories that were won by our sailors, and those victories alone, saved the nation from most humiliating losses when peace was made. From the capture of the *Macedonian* in the sunlit seas south of the Azores to the crowing of the rooster in Macdonough's rigging under the evergreen slopes of the Adirondacks, every triumph of the "gridiron flag" was made possible by the victory of the *Constitution*.

Even that is not all to be said of the effect of this battle upon the American people. When the war was declared, New England—Massachusetts especially—was full of traitors. The secession of New England from the Union was openly advocated by men of influence. Direct communications were held with the enemy. Indeed, during the early part of the war the forces of the enemy in the field in Canada would have been unable to keep the field but for the food supplies that were purchased of the traitorous merchants of Boston and elsewhere in New England. The proposed movements of American forces were betrayed to the enemy. In return for the favors thus received the British left the northern part of the American coast unblockaded, and Admiral Sir John B. Warren, commanding the American station, had orders to encourage the secessionists by all means possible. While the nation was just beginning to struggle from under the incubus of "peaceable coercion" these men rose up with their threat of secession, and they were so powerful that the Government did not dare to use force to repress them lest a civil war be precipitated.

But when the *Constitution* came into port with her flags flying from every mast and yard-arm, the exultant shouts that arose alongshore swelled to a mighty roar that was

heard and felt to the uttermost parts of the nation. Nothing could alter the state of mind of the New England leaders, but the innate love of country among the people as a whole, as distinguished from a love of a section, was stirred as in the days of the Revolution. A candid reading of the history of the country before the War of 1812 shows that the ablest men of the North as well as of the South believed in the right of secession under the Constitution. In the rejoicing of the people over the naval victories of the War of 1812, however, was born that national spirit which made possible the success of the War for the Union fifty years later. The battle between the *Constitution* and the *Guerrière* was only a "naval duel," but it saved the navy and it saved the nation.

CHAPTER X

VICTORIES THAT WERE TIMELY

The blow for liberty which Captain Hull delivered in August was repeated four times within six months thereafter.

On October 13 the sloop-of-war *Wasp*, Captain Jacob Jones, sailed from Delaware Bay on a search for British merchantmen homeward bound from the West Indies. Three days later he ran into a gale and lost his jibboom and two men that were at work upon it when it dipped into the sea. Then at 11:30 o'clock at night, while the gale was still blowing, he fell in with a small fleet of merchantmen under the convoy of the British sloop-of-war *Frolic*, Captain Thomas Whinyates.

The *Wasp* and the *Frolic* were as near on an equality as ships of war were likely to be. The *Frolic* carried sixteen 32-pounder carronades and four 12-pounders on the main deck, with two short 12-pounders on the topgallant forecastle (Report of Captain Jones). She could, therefore, fire eleven guns throwing 292 pounds of metal at a broadside, where the *Wasp* carried sixteen short 32's and two long 12's, thus throwing nominally 268 pounds of metal at a broadside, but really only 250 on account of the American shot being of light weight, not only in this battle but throughout the whole war. In guns the British ship was much more powerful. On the other hand, the *Frolic* carried a crew of 110, where the *Wasp*, being equipped with men for manning the merchantmen she expected to take, had 135.

Being unable to make out the force of the convoy at night, Captain Jones stood by well to windward until daylight, when he ran down for a look. The *Frolic* hoisted Spanish colors as a decoy, and the *Wasp* came within sixty yards and hailed. Then the *Frolic* set her own ensign and, with her crew cheering, began the battle. The *Wasp* crew cheered and returned the fire.

The wind was from the southwest and both vessels were heading to the north, the *Wasp* being on the west side of the *Frolic*. The two were about due east of Albemarle Sound and a little west of north from the Bermudas. As both were running well before the wind they both rolled heavily. The British, following the plan of battle which Nelson had given his men, loaded and fired as rapidly as possible. According to the testimony of Captain Whinyates the British fire was "superior" (meaning that it was delivered more rapidly), a fact worth note in connection with the British complaint about the small number of men on board, and Captain Jones confirmed the report by saying that the *Frolic* fired three broadsides to the *Wasp's* two. After loading their guns, the Americans waited until the *Wasp* was on the crest of a wave and just starting to roll toward the enemy; then they fired. The British shot, almost without exception, flew high above the deck of the *Wasp*, while the shot of the *Wasp* struck home in the *Frolic's* hull.

The first gun was fired at 11:32 in the morning. Four minutes later the *Wasp's* maintopmast was shot away, and it fell on the foreyards, rendering them unmanageable. Ten minutes later still the mizzen topgallant mast and the gaff were shot down. In the meantime her braces and rigging were so badly cut that by 11:52 the *Wasp* was a wreck aloft. But she could yet run before the wind, and with helm aport could draw in steadily to a shorter range. At the last, when the Americans were loading their guns,

their rammers reached out and struck the sides of the *Frolic*. Then, with the *Wasp* drawing across the bows of the enemy, the two hulls came together, the bow of the *Frolic* sawing up and down against the broadside of the *Wasp*. A raking broadside was now fired into the *Frolic*, and then, with a New Jersey sailor named Jack Lang in the lead, the crew of the *Wasp* boarded.

They found the battle was already ended. Not a man opposed them, and Lieutenant James Biddle, of the *Wasp*, hauled down the British flag. Captain Whinyates reported that out of 110 men only twenty escaped unhurt. About thirty were killed outright or died of their wounds. The *Wasp* had five killed and five wounded. Three of the killed were aloft when hit; they were shot out of the rigging like squirrels from a tree. The hull of the *Wasp* was hit by four shot; that of the *Frolic* was riddled.

Here, even more noticeably than in the fight between the *Guerrière* and the *Constitution*, the man behind the gun won the victory. Still, the fighting on the *Frolic* was not altogether in vain, for it inflicted so much damage on the spars of the *Wasp* that she was delayed in getting ready to sail away, and while she was yet making repairs the British liner *Poictiers*, Captain J. P. Beresford, came on the scene and carried both sloops to the Bermudas.

The British Admiralty took the *Wasp* into their service under the name of *Loup Cervier*. The *Frolic* they broke up, though she was not an old vessel, just as they would have cashiered an officer that had disgraced himself.

The story of the *Macedonian* is of special interest because she was the only British frigate that was brought into port. She was captured by the frigate *United States*, Captain Stephen Decatur. On Sunday, October 25, when south of the Azores and west of the Canary Islands, the lookout on the *United States* saw the British frigate

Macedonian, Captain John Surman Carden, about twelve miles away and dead to windward.

The *Macedonian* was called a "crack ship." She was only about two years old, and had recently been in dock for a cleaning. She was much swifter than the *United States.* Her executive officer, Lieutenant David Hope, wrote of her that "the state of discipline on board was excellent; in no British ship was more attention paid to gunnery . . . the crew were constantly exercised at the great guns." Her battery consisted of twenty-eight long 18-pounders, two long 12-pounders, two long 8-pounders, sixteen short 32-pounders and a short 18-pounder that was shifted from side to side on the forecastle. Her crew numbered 301, of whom, as the British historian is careful to note, 35 were boys. The *United States* carried twenty-seven guns in a broadside—sixteen long 24's, one long twelve and eight short 42's. The actual weights of metal thrown were about 786 pounds from the American to 547 from the British ship.

When the *Macedonian* was first seen both ships were heading about southwest. The *Macedonian* at once put up her helm and turning around squared away in a course that, if held, would have taken her across the bows of the *United States* at short range. But Captain Carden supposed (James says) that the American ship was the frigate *Essex,* which, as he knew, was armed chiefly with short guns, and at 8:30 o'clock, while yet a long way out of range, he shortened sail and changed his course so as to take a position within the range of his own long guns, but out of range of the short guns of the supposed *Essex.*

The two ships then passed each other at a range of perhaps a mile. Decatur fired a broadside, but most of the shot fell short. The *Macedonian* did not reply, but she turned round and headed back toward the southwest on a course about parallel with that of the *United States.*

The *Macedonian* now drew near, and at a range of half a mile the firing became general. Only the long guns could reach. Captain Carden was taking advantage, as he supposed, of his long-range battery as against the short guns of the supposed *Essex*. But he soon saw his mistake. The crew of the *United States* worked their long guns with a speed that sheeted the ship with flames until the British thought she was on fire, and cheered accordingly. But the flames were shot-laden, and, in spite of the speed of firing the shot were striking home in the hull of the *Macedonian*. After a time Decatur ceased firing and made sail ahead until clear of his own smoke. Then he again opened fire, and was able to rake the *Macedonian* diagonally.

It was now plain to Captain Carden that his ship would be shot to pieces at that range and, with good pluck but exceedingly bad judgment, he headed his ship down end-on toward the *United States*, intending to try to board her. However, it was all in vain, for Decatur laid the *United States* across the course of the *Macedonian* and, backing his mizzen sails to prevent forging ahead, he worked his guns with more deadly effect than ever. The carronades now became effective. The *Macedonian's* mizzen mast was shot away. Her mainyard was cut in two at the mast. All the short guns on her fighting side except two were disabled, and two of her long guns were put out of action. More than a hundred round shot pierced her hull, and instead of swooping down alongside, as had been intended, she was simply beaten to a standstill—cut up until she drifted away with the wind. At 11:15 o'clock the British flag was hauled down.

The actual fighting had lasted an hour and a half, and Decatur, in his official report, felt obliged to apologize for the great length of time required. He said:

"The enemy being to windward had the advantage of

engaging us at his own distance, which was so great that for the first half hour we did not use our carronades, and at no moment was he within the complete effect of our musketry or grape—to this circumstance and a heavy swell I ascribe the *unusual length of the action.*"

On the *United States* seven men were killed or mortally wounded and five others were more or less hurt. On the *Macedonian* forty-three lost their lives and sixty-one were wounded. The *United States* was hit in the hull by only three shot; the *Macedonian* by "more than a hundred." The *Macedonian* was dismasted; the *United States* lost her mizzen topgallant mast only. Of course her rigging was cut up somewhat, but not to an extent that would prevent her meeting another ship within an hour.

The captured ship was brought to Newport, R. I. The *United States* made port at New London. Decatur saw that bringing in an English frigate would be of more value to the country, especially in the way of rousing national sentiment, than anything he could do by continuing the cruise after destroying her. A most delightful story is told of the arrival at Washington of the news of the victory. The society people were giving a grand ball to the naval officers in the city, including Hull, Stewart and Morris, who had been Hull's executive officer. The ball-room was decorated with the flags of the *Guerrière* and the sloop *Alert*, the capture of which will be described further on. While all were thrilled by these tokens of victory Lieutenant Archibald Hamilton, from the frigate *United States*, was announced, and the next moment he strode into the room with the flag of the *Macedonian* across his shoulders.

The dancing ceased instantly; the men gave one look and then, gathering around the young man, as by a single impulse picked him up on their shoulders and cheered till the welkin rang.

The *Macedonian* was taken into the service. She never had the luck to show what an American crew could do with her, but she served a good purpose for many years as a practice ship at the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

On October 26, the day after Decatur's victory over the *Macedonian*, the *Constitution* sailed from Boston under the command of Commodore William Bainbridge. The sloop-of-war *Hornet* sailed with her, and the *Essex*, Captain David Porter, was under orders to sail from the Delaware and join her at the Cape de Verde Islands. The *Essex* failed to join, and, on December 13, the *Constitution* and the *Hornet* arrived at San Salvador (now called Bahia), Brazil. They found a British sloop-of-war, the *Bonne Citoyenne*, Captain Pitt Barnaby Greene, in port, and as she was of exactly the same force in guns and men as the *Hornet*, Captain James Lawrence, commanding the *Hornet*, strove urgently to arrange for a fight outside. But this the Englishman declined to do even after the *Constitution* had left the coast to go home. The *Hornet* blockaded the port until near the end of January, 1813, when a British liner came up from Rio Janeiro to protect the *Bonne Citoyenne*.

The *Constitution* was more fortunate. At 9 o'clock A. M., on December 29, 1812, while cruising about thirty miles off the coast near Bahia, she met the British frigate *Java*, Captain Henry Lambert.

The *Java* was a good ship, which was manned in an extraordinary manner. She was bound to the East Indies, and was carrying a hundred seamen for the ships already on that station, besides a number of extra officers of the navy, and a lieutenant-general for the army. She had on board in all 426 fighting sailors to the *Constitution's* 475. Her guns were about like those of the *Guerrière* and the *Macedonian*, but the preponderance of gun power in favor

of the *Constitution* was larger than that in either of the other frigate actions.

Being well to windward the *Java* headed down in chase of the *Constitution*, and at 2 o'clock the *Constitution* fired the first shot. At this time the two ships were headed easterly with the *Java* to the north of the *Constitution*. Being swifter the *Java* forereached, and after a time she put up her helm to sail down across the bow of the *Constitution* to rake her. To avoid this, Bainbridge wore around and headed the *Constitution* to the west, with the *Java* following and still holding a position to the north of the *Constitution*—that is, the weatherly position. Once more she forereached, but the *Constitution* now set more sail and luffed up to a shorter range and thus gave full effect to her battery of short 42-pounders. The *Constitution's* fire now became much more deadly, while that of the *Java* grew less effective. Just before 3 o'clock the *Java's* bowsprit was shot away and while she was thus hampered somewhat in her manœuvres the *Constitution* was able to get in position to rake her. Thereupon the British strove to close in alongside to fight it out by boarding, but before they could get their ship headed in the right direction the *Constitution* shot away their foremast (it was at 3:05). Then crossing the *Java's* bow the *Constitution* raked her once more, and at 3:15 shot away her maintopmast. At this moment Captain Henry Lambert was killed, but Lieutenant H. D. Chads maintained the fight. At 3:55 o'clock the *Java's* mizzenmast was shot away, and at 4:05 her fire ceased.

Since the *Java* was now a helpless hulk Bainbridge sailed the *Constitution* up to windward to repair her rigging; for it must be remembered that throughout this war the Americans were obliged to keep constantly in mind the fact that the British had a thousand ships where the Americans had a score—that other ships belonging to the

enemy were likely to appear at any moment, as the liner *Poictiers* appeared to the triumphant *Wasp*. Having beaten the *Java* to a "standstill" it was the duty of Commodore Bainbridge to put his ship in order for another fight as soon as possible.

While repairing the rigging of the *Constitution* Bainbridge saw the mainmast of the *Java* fall; she was now as bare as the *Guerrière* had been, and when the *Constitution* returned the British flag was at once hauled down. The fight had lasted a little more than two hours.

The injury done to the *Constitution* was repaired well enough in an hour. In all, twelve officers and enlisted men were mortally hurt while the wounded numbered twenty-two. Bainbridge was one of the wounded. The *Java* was shot to pieces in hull and rigging, and on the 31st she was burned. At least forty-eight of the British crew died of their wounds. A letter written by Lieutenant H. D. Corneck of the *Java* and printed in Niles's *Register* on February 27, 1813, said that sixty were killed on the *Java* and 170 wounded. Bainbridge, however, reported but 102 wounded and it is likely that Corneck was mistaken also as to the number killed.

The *Constitution* sailed from Bahia for the United States on January 6, 1813, and arrived at Boston on February 27. In connection with what has been said about the influence of the War of 1812 upon the American people the following quotation from Niles's *Register* may be of interest:

"Commodore Bainbridge, on landing at Boston, was received with a salute of cannon, and the loud acclamations of thousands; many instruments of *sweet* music playing the good old tune of 'Yankee Doodle'—the streets were filled with a delighted populace, and the house and chimney tops covered with people. Party feeling was prostrated in national glory. The Legislature of Massachusetts being in session passed a vote of thanks."

This legislature, spurred on by party rancor, was to resolve, later, that the war was "waged without justifiable cause." The Federalists of Massachusetts were unable to think that the rights of common sailors were worth fighting for; but they could not repress a shout of joy over the victory of the *Constitution*, and the influence of that shout was to endure until they were all well ashamed of the spirit that had prompted the resolution mentioned.

On leaving Bahia Captain Lawrence headed the *Hornet* northerly along the South American coast, and on February 24, while crossing from Surinam toward Demerara, he fell in with the British sloop-of-war *Peacock*, Captain William Peake. The *Peacock* was of the same class of warships as the *Frolic*, that had been captured by the *Wasp*, but she was armed with short 24-pounders instead of 32-pounders, and her effective crew (seven men were on the sick list) numbered 122. The *Hornet* carried 135 men at this time.

At 4:20 o'clock in the afternoon the two vessels sent their men to quarters. Both vessels were on the port tack at this time but at the end of a race lasting fifty minutes the *Hornet* turned to the starboard tack with room enough to cross the bows of the enemy. As the two drew close together the *Peacock* veered off a little to avoid being raked, and at 5:25 o'clock they passed at half pistol range and opened fire.

There was time for only one broadside as they passed, but the *Peacock* at once wore around while the *Hornet* veered off so that the two were soon side by side again and the firing became fiercer than before. The crew of the *Hornet* now worked so swiftly that they were obliged to dip up water from the sea and dash it over their guns to cool them off. Meantime, while the two vessels were so close together that it would seem impossible for any shot to go wide of the mark, the shot of the British did scarcely

any damage. The first shot from the *Peacock* cut away the pennant that was flying from the highest point of the *Hornet's* mizzenmast; and that shot was fired when the two vessels were but half a pistol shot apart! How the Americans handled their guns is shown by the fact that at 5:39 o'clock, just fourteen minutes after the firing of the first shot, the *Peacock* not only surrendered but she hoisted a signal of distress, and a moment later her mainmast fell over the side.

The American sailors responded and did all they could to keep the British ship afloat, but in spite of pumps and bailing, she sank so suddenly that three of the Americans and nine of the British were drowned. One man was killed and two were wounded on the *Hornet*. All three were aloft. On the *Peacock* eight were killed, including the captain, and thirty wounded.

The *Peacock* was a pretty thing, so pretty that she was called "the yacht." Her metal work was polished daily until it shone in the sun. Her paint work was immaculate. Even the breechings of her guns were done up in painted canvas. It is manifest that Captain Peake had mistaken his calling.

The meeting between the frigate *President* and the British sloop *Little Belt*, before the war began (May 16, 1811), has features of special interest. After Madison laid the final embargo, preceding the war, the British cruisers were sent along the American coast to make a demonstration of power and overawe the republic. The *Guerrière* was then under the command of Captain G. R. Pechell. Pechell impressed an American seaman within American waters and then painted the name of his ship on her foretopsail and went swooping up and down the American coast inviting the whole Yankee navy to come to get their man.

Commodore John Rodgers, in the frigate *President*, who was then cruising on the coast, went hunting the

Guerrière and had the bad luck to fall in with the sloop-of-war *Little Belt,* Captain Arthur B. Bingham, instead. Thinking her the *Guerrière,* Rodgers came alongside at 8:30 o'clock at night when thirty miles off Cape Charles.

After a bit of unsatisfactory hailing the *Little Belt* fired a gun the shot from which struck the mainmast of the *President.* Rodgers fired one shot in return and then the firing became general. At the end of eighteen minutes at most the *Little Belt* was rolling in the trough of the sea, unmanageable. Her firing having ceased, Rodgers stopped his fire and then lay by until morning when he sent an offer of help, which was declined. The *Little Belt* had lost twelve killed and twenty-one wounded.

The affair is of interest partly because this was really the first encounter of the war, but chiefly because Captain Bingham reported that after the first broadside from the *President* "the action then became general and continued so for three-quarters of an hour when he ceased firing" and "*stood from us.*" The British naval officers in 1811 fully believed that their little sloop-of-war had compelled the frigate *President,* the ship afterwards called a battleship in disguise, to haul out of the fight.

The story of the capture of the sloop-of-war *Alert,* Captain T. L. O. Laugharne, by the frigate *Essex,* Captain David Porter, is of similar interest. Porter sailed from New York on July 3, 1812, and on August 13 saw the *Alert* to windward. Drags were put out behind the *Essex* and then she made sail as if to escape. The *Alert* came down swiftly and when she fired a gun the *Essex* hove to, as a merchantman would have done. Then the *Alert* passed down across the stern of the *Essex* so close at hand that her crew saw that she was a frigate instead of a merchantman. Nevertheless, while the British vessel carried only twenty short 18-pounders and the *Essex* carried forty short 32-pounders and six long 12-pounders,

the British gave three cheers and began the battle with a broadside. Of course they surrendered after a broadside from the *Essex*.

These two tales of the war are commonly told in the United States to illustrate British arrogance at that time. If rightly seen, however, they show merely that the British naval officer had taken the American people at the estimate which the American Congress had placed upon them. Congress, and many people outside of Congress, had affirmed that the idea of American warships meeting those of Great Britain on any terms was too ridiculous for sober argument. It is when one considers the meaning of our early victories upon public opinion at home and abroad that the importance of even such minor operations as ship duels is appreciated. If the effect which this change of opinion had upon the character of the American people be also considered it will not be too much to compare these random operations with the fleet actions fought by the admirals of the Old World.

CHAPTER XI

LOSS OF THE CHESAPEAKE AND THE ARGUS

It is a curious fact that the histories of the War of 1812, almost without exception, discuss the fighting at sea with scarcely any reference to the relative number of ships in the two navies. The sizes and forces of the individual ships in combat are given in minute detail and the handling of each ship is then discussed as if the two ships engaged were the only ones afloat—as if there was no occasion for either captain to consider the number of ships in the navy of his opponent. Even as late as 1860 Sir Howard Douglas, the most noted British authority on gunnery, intimated that Captain Hull showed cowardice in approaching the *Guerrière;* the fact that Hull used caution in approaching because he was alone upon a sea where the British might bring a score of frigates against him was wholly ignored by the British writer. If the work of our navy is to be understood the one most important fact to be kept in mind is that our captains went to sea singly as well as in squadrons of a frigate or two, with a sloop, when it was very well known that the British force on the American station was ten times that of any force the Americans sent to sea.

In the spring of 1813 Admiral Warren, commanding at Halifax, had a total of eleven line-of-battle ships, thirty-four of the best frigates in the British navy, and thirty-eight sloops, not to more than mention the brigs and smaller vessels. In addition to those under his immediate command there were squadrons in the West Indies, at the Azores, and elsewhere, all stationed with special reference

to war with the United States—they were all on guard to intercept the American ships. Against all these liners and frigates the American navy had ready for service two or three frigates and half a dozen smaller vessels. The other American ships, few in number at best, were either blockaded in port or were in the hands of ship carpenters. Yet, few as were the number of American ships available, and small as was their force as compared with the huge liners that were detailed to hunt them, *they went to sea.* And, as time passed, the American sailor became positively foolhardy and thus brought disaster upon the navy.

First on the list of the foolhardy stands Captain James Lawrence, who had blockaded the *Bonne Citoyenne* at Bahia and had sunk the *Peacock* a few days after leaving Bahia. On returning to the United States Lawrence was promoted and ordered to the *Chesapeake*, then lying at Boston. As his letters show Lawrence did not want this ship, and he hoped that another would come to take her even after he was on board. Whether he was affected by the common sailor superstition about an unlucky ship, or not, is not told in the records. That the sailors shunned the *Chesapeake*, however, is a fact well known.

The *Chesapeake* had recently returned from an unsuccessful cruise when Lawrence took her. Only a few of her old crew remained in her. To recruit a new crew was difficult not only because she was an unlucky ship but because the privateers offered better chances for prize money. However, a few veterans from the *Constitution* were secured, and the remainder of the crew was made up from the sweepings of the alongshore boarding-houses. Indeed the crew of the *Chesapeake* was much like that of the ordinary British frigate of the day. To match the fact that the British crews were impressed was the fact that the *Chesapeake's* crew had thirty or forty British renegades and a lot of Portuguese, a boatswain's mate (a

CAPTAIN ISAAC HULL.

FROM AN ENGRAVING AT THE NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON,
OF THE PAINTING BY STUART.

leading petty officer) belonging to the latter treacherous gang.

Bad as this "scrub" crew was, it might have been whipped into shape with a few weeks of drill, but of this they never got an hour. To add to the disorder on board four of her regular officers were on shore sick. Third Lieutenant A. C. Ludlow, a youth of twenty-one years, had to take the place of the executive officer. Lieutenant George Budd, another youth, was made second lieutenant, and the third and fourth officers were two midshipmen, W. S. Cox and J. Ballard, who had never had rank of that grade before. The officers were unacquainted with each other and they were unacquainted with the crew. The crew were, for the most part, without uniform, and they did not know each other or their officers. Many of the crew came on board just as the *Chesapeake* was on the point of sailing; the boats that brought them were hoisted in and put in place with the clothing of the sailors lying under the thwarts. There was not even a station bill to tell the sailors where they were to stand in time of battle. It is important to note, however, in connection with this fact that the experienced men of the crew were naturally placed at the long guns on the main or lower fighting deck while the unknown and untrustworthy were placed on deck to handle the sails.

All of this is of importance, not so much for the purpose of excusing the defeat that followed upon the battle, as for the purpose of showing the utter recklessness—in fact the criminal folly—of the captain who would take out such an crew to meet a ship of equal force manned by seasoned sailors.

And yet, while pointing out the utter folly of the young captain (he was only thirty-two years old), it should be noted that he was to a remarkable degree a type of his people. In the long period of humiliation and peril be-

fore the War of 1812 they made no more preparation for the war that was coming than Lawrence made to meet the *Shannon*. It was as a typical American that Captain Lawrence got up his anchor and, wholly unprepared, sailed out to meet the enemy, on June 1, 1813. In record force the ships were almost equal. The actual weight of metal thrown from the *Chesapeake* at a broadside was 542 pounds to 550 from the *Shannon*. The *Chesapeake* carried 379 men; the *Shannon* carried 330.

While the *Chesapeake* sailed out of the harbor Lawrence called all hands aft to listen to a little speech. As he ceased talking the Portuguese boatswain's mate stepped from the crowd of seamen and said insolently that if he and thirty of his mates were not paid some prize-money, alleged to be due, they would not fight when the enemy was overtaken. Here was a mutiny with the enemy in sight. Because of a mutiny on board the British liner *Plantagenet*, during the course of the war, Captain Lloyd commanding her, actually ran away from the frigate *President*. He was, of course, fully justified in doing so. Lawrence, however, knowing well that the *Shannon* was a ship of equal force, kept on. He did not even kill the mutineer to restore discipline; on the contrary he yielded to the demand and calling the mutineers to the cabin gave them the money claimed.

When Lawrence arrived within battle range of the *Shannon*, the wind was in his favor and he was able to reach down on her starboard quarter to a place where he had it in his power to cross her stern and open the battle by raking her from aft forward without receiving in return any fire of importance. But, listening to the promptings of chivalry, Lawrence refused to rake the *Shannon*. Instead he reached up along her starboard side so that she had at least an equal chance in the gun fire.

As the bow of the *Chesapeake* forged slowly along, the

gunner behind the aftermost 18-pounder on the *Shannon's* main deck took good aim, waited until the second port of the American was abreast and then fired. It was then 5:50 o'clock. The gunners in succession forward along the *Shannon's* decks fired as this one had done, and every shot struck the *Chesapeake*.

Captain Lawrence waited until he was fairly abreast of the *Shannon* before he fired a broadside. Then, on seeing that he was forging ahead to a position from which he could cross the *Shannon's* bow and rake her, Captain Lawrence deliberately squared his mainyards—set the mainsails shivering to check the speed of his ship and keep her broadside to that of the enemy. Indeed, when at 5:53 o'clock he saw that the *Chesapeake* was still gaining a little on the *Shannon* he deliberately luffed up into the wind and thus threw his mainsails aback. That threw the stern of the *Chesapeake* alee and toward the *Shannon*. Thus the guns of the *Chesapeake* were made to bear less effectively on the enemy, while the guns of the *Shannon* were able to rake the *Chesapeake* diagonally and inflict greater damage.

As we can now see clearly, Lawrence thus threw away his last chance of victory. The *Chesapeake* was soon drifting stern first toward the *Shannon*. The broadside which the *Shannon* at once fired—the British were not animated by any of the folly of chivalry—beat in the stern ports of the *Chesapeake* and swept her deck. Lawrence had been wounded already but had kept the deck. He was now shot down, mortally hurt, and was carried below, Lieutenant Cox assisting him. The chief officer was also wounded and carried down. Then the boatswain was killed. With not an officer on the upper deck to lead the men who were there; with the quarterdeck bare of men and with the ship wholly out of control, the *Chesapeake's* stern struck the *Shannon* just forward of the main rigging.

Seeing the conditions on the deck of the *Chesapeake*, the alert captain of the *Shannon* called for boarders, and himself led the way. The afterpart of the *Chesapeake* was his for the taking. To secure the forward part he had to fight. As he charged forward the Portuguese boatswain's mate and the other foreigners fled below, and hid in the hold. Even then it was no easy work to get control of the forecastle, for the Americans who remained fought so well that thirty out of the fifty men who boarded the *Chesapeake* were killed or wounded. Nevertheless it was in vain that Lieutenant Budd, who had been stationed below, strove to bring his men up the hatches to drive the British overboard, it was in vain that Ludlow, although already mortally wounded, came on deck once more and it was all in vain that Lawrence shouted, as he saw the British standing over the hatches:

"Don't give up the ship! Blow her up!"

At 6:05 resistance ceased. The *Chesapeake* was captured in just fifteen minutes. On the *Shannon* thirty-three were killed and fifty more or less wounded; on the *Chesapeake* sixty-one were killed and eighty-five wounded.

Overconfidence and chivalry lost the *Chesapeake;* happily for his reputation Captain Lawrence lost his life at the same time, and died saying "Don't give up the ship!" For no explanation could have saved him from the severest censure if he had lived to face the court-martial that cashiered Lieutenant Cox for helping the wounded captain down the hatchway when he was needed on deck.

The most interesting, as distinguished from the most important, feature of the battle between the *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon* is found in the effect of the victory upon the British people. In Parliament, on July 8, John Wilson Croker, secretary to the Admiralty, said:

"The action with the *Chesapeake* was in every respect unexampled. It was not—and he knew it was a bold as-

sertion which he made—to be surpassed by any engagement which graced the naval annals of Great Britain." (Brighton's "Memoir of Admiral Broke," p. 294.) This statement was cheered enthusiastically. The work of Broke in whipping an American frigate of equal force is thus ranked with the work of Nelson in his fleet combats with the French and Spaniards. Broke was promoted, of course. He was also made a baronet and a "knight commander of the most honourable Military Order of the Bath." The Admiralty struck a gold medal in his honor. The victory was celebrated in the British navy by a song that is yet popular:

Now alongside they range,
And broadsides they exchange;
But the Yankees soon flinch from their cannon,
When captain and crew
Without further ado
Are attacked, sword in hand, from the *Shannon*,
And the tight little tars from the *Shannon*
Fired a friendly salute
Just to end the dispute,
And the *Chesapeake* struck to the *Shannon*.

Better yet, a British work called "Deeds that Won the Empire," published in 1898, and a popular work it is, too, tells the story of the *Chesapeake* and *Shannon* along with those of Waterloo and Trafalgar. It was a memorable day when a "Yankee" frigate was captured, for that was the only battle of the war, with possibly one exception, of which an Englishman can speak without making explanations.

The effect of this battle upon the American people is also of great interest. The American navy had won five victories in uninterrupted succession; the American patriots were in a state of mind where victories were expected as a matter of course, regardless of conditions.

Accordingly they did not consider the conditions under which the battle between the *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon* was fought, and it is only within recent years that our historians have given any material consideration to the errors, decisive in their character, which Lawrence made. The people found consolation only in the valor of the dead captain—in repeating his heroic words, "Don't give up the ship!" So Lawrence has been enshrined as a hero when he should have been held up as a type, in at least one important respect, of what a naval officer should not be.

When the effect of the whole war upon the evolution of the American people is considered in connection with the loss of the *Chesapeake*, however, the patriot may note with some pride that the depression of 1813 was not due to the extent of the loss. Indeed, the extent of the loss was not discussed by the press of the day, and as for the cost of the lost frigate it is fair to suppose that no one gave or has given a thought to it. The whole American people were depressed by the fact that an American ship had been defeated. Manifestly some change had come over public opinion in the United States since the days when the idea of the American navy being able to meet the British was openly ridiculed in Congress.

The other battle mentioned above, of which an Englishman may speak without making an explanation, was that between the American brig *Argus* and the British brig *Pelican*. The *Argus*, Captain W. H. Allen, went cruising off the coast of England and Wales. Allen was an officer on the *Chesapeake* when she was assaulted by the *Leopard*, in 1807, and it was he who brought a coal from the galley in his bare hands and fired the one gun that spoke for American honor in that encounter. He was also the executive officer of the frigate *United States* when she captured the *Macedonian*, and the good work of the American crew was due to his training. But, like Lawrence, Allen

had grown reckless. Off the coast of Wales he burned a British merchantman that was carrying a cargo of wine from Oporto, Portugal, and before he burned it he allowed his crew to get drunk. The light of this fire brought the British brig *Pelican*, Captain John Fordyce Maples, to the scene, and after a fair fight she captured the *Argus*. Allen was among the ten men killed on the *Argus*.

CHAPTER XII

ON THE GREAT LAKES

Most instructive and interesting are the stories of the War of 1812 as fought out along the great lakes. It was in the great lake region that the American militia, the natural defenders of a republic, were to show what valor without training could do. No patriot doubted that the flight of the British would be made instantaneously, and with haste, and that, too, although the British had a squadron of six ships carrying eighty guns on Lake Ontario, where the Americans had the little sloop-of-war *Oneida*, carrying sixteen short 24-pounders only. The largest British ship, called the *Royal George*, mounted twenty-two guns, of which three were long 18-pounders, two were short 68-pounders and sixteen were short 32-pounders. One of the 18-pounders was on a pivot. She alone had twice the force of the *Oneida* and the squadron was stationed opposite Kingston, just across the lake from Sacket Harbor, where the *Oneida* lay when the war began.

What the American militia failed to do occupies large space in the histories of the war. What the men of the navy did shall now be told.

On July 19, 1812, the British squadron came to Sacket Harbor to destroy the *Oneida* and the naval station there. A fort, armed with one gun, was manned by Lieutenant M. T. Woolsey, of the navy, and the squadron was driven away. Then Woolsey, favored by the incompetent British commodore, went out with the *Oneida* and took a number of British merchantmen. One of these vessels, when

fitted with three guns, met and drove off two British cruisers, the *Moira* of fourteen and the *Gloucester* of ten guns. Lieutenant Henry Wells commanded the American vessel.

On October 6 Commodore Isaac Chauncey arrived at Sacket Harbor to take charge of the naval war on the lakes. He laid the keel of a ship called the *Madison*, which carried twenty-four short 32-pounders, and he improvised a flotilla of schooners that were armed with a variety of long and short guns. On November 8 he sailed with his flotilla, found the *Royal George* off the False Duck Islands and chased her into Kingston. Then he set his smaller vessels to bombarding the forts while he with the *Oneida* (the *Madison* was yet on the stocks) sailed boldly into the harbor and drove the *Royal George* close in against the dock, where she was well protected by the fire of some hundreds of soldiers. Thereafter, the British remained in port till ice came.

On Lake Erie the British had captured a small brig called the *Detroit*, which was armed with 6-pounders. They already had a brig called the *Caledonia* that carried two 4-pounders. With these they controlled the lake. This control was most important because it enabled them to carry supplies to their army in Michigan and the northern Ohio and Indiana regions, and keep in touch with the friendly Indians as well. The Indians were used in raiding the American home-makers. At the same time they carried all their furs to the thrifty traders at the British camps.

The value of the fur trade is seen in the fact that the *Caledonia* was loaded with pelts worth $200,000 and sent from Detroit to Fort Erie, opposite Buffalo. The brig *Detroit* went with her. In the meantime Commodore Chauncey had sent Lieutenant Jesse D. Elliott up to Erie, Pa., to start the work of building a fleet with which to regain control of Lake Erie, and when the two British

brigs arrived in the Niagara River he happened to be in the village of Black Rock, now a part of Buffalo. Organizing a force of 170 odd sailors and soldiers Elliott went afloat in two big row boats and captured both brigs. The *Caledonia* was brought to the American bank but the *Detroit* grounded on Squaw Island, where she was destroyed.

Chauncey put the *Madison* in commission and started work on another ship called the *General Pike,* which was named after General Zebulon Pike, the explorer who discovered Pike's Peak and did other good work in the wilds of America. Pike at that time was at Sacket Harbor with a force of American soldiers who were destined to invade Canada. On April 25, 1813, Chauncey sailed with the *Madison,* the *Oneida* and the schooners, taking 1,700 of the soldiers to York, the city now called Toronto. There Pike landed with the soldiers while Chauncey's vessel attacked the forts and the place was soon captured; for it was garrisoned by only 700 men, a part of whom were untrained militia. A 24-gun ship that was on the stocks was burned and the 10-gun brig *Gloucester* was captured and sent to Sacket Harbor.

The losses on both sides, but especially on the American side, were extraordinary, because a powder magazine was exploded in one of the forts after the Americans entered it. The total American loss was 288 killed and wounded, of whom fifty-two were killed and 180 wounded by the explosion. General Pike was among the killed. The British lost 180 killed and wounded, of whom forty were hurt in the explosion.

Some public buildings, including the House of Parliament, were burned by indignant American soldiers acting without authority, because in the House of Parliament they found a human scalp hanging beside the mace. They thought the presence of the scalp beside the mace (the em-

blem of power) was truly symbolical of the British power in Canada at that time.

From Toronto Chauncey sailed to the Niagara River, to take part in an attack upon Fort George. Colonel Winfield Scott commanded the American soldiers that crossed the river and Chauncey placed Captain Oliver Hazard Perry in charge of the boats that carried the soldiers across. Perry had previously been sent to Erie, Pa., to take charge of the ship-building operations for the recovery of the command of Lake Erie, but he had heard of the prospect of a fight, and had come to take a hand in it. The fort was taken on May 27, 1813. The British were outnumbered and their forts were not fit to withstand the assaults of the naval ships.

This victory drove the British away from the entire line, of the Niagara. It also gave Perry a chance to take the brig *Caledonia* and four merchant schooners that had been purchased for naval uses from Black Rock up the lake to Erie.

While Chauncey was thus at work at the west end of the lake Sacket Harbor had been left with such poor defences that General Sir George Prevost, commanding the land forces at Kingston, and Captain Sir James Lucas Yeo, who now commanded the British ships there, determined to cross and destroy the station. They had, in the meantime, launched a 24-gun ship called the *Wolfe*, and their fleet included six war vessels. The soldiers, under Sir George Prevost, numbered 1,200, and included 800 regulars. In addition to the white soldiers were a horde of Indians who were looking for "Yankee" scalps and plunder. General Jacob Brown, commanding the Americans at Sacket Harbor had 400 regulars, 200 volunteers from Albany who were good men, and 400 militiamen gathered from the neighborhood and commanded, of course, by the most able politicians of northern New York.

On the 29th Sir George landed his men and at the first gun the entire 400 militia fled in a senseless panic. Hearing from the flying militiamen that all was lost, an officer stationed at the naval storehouses set them on fire. He also fired the new 28-gun ship *General Pike* and the captured brig *Gloucester*. The rising smoke filled the American regulars with dismay, but having some of the John-Paul-Jones pluck they held their ground until messengers sent after the flying militiamen were able to rally 200. When Sir George saw these 200 returning flunkers he hastened away.

The Americans lost their stores but the vessels were saved. It was a tidy little victory which attracted no attention at the time because of the loss of the *Chesapeake*, on June 1.

On August 7 the hostile fleets (or squadrons, one hardly knows how to designate such aggregations of vessels) met for the first time. The American vessels were superior in gun power at long range, if the water were smooth. The British were superior at short range or at any range if the water were rough. The Americans had more long guns than the enemy but many of these long guns were mounted on vessels so small that nothing could be done with them in a seaway. The quality of these schooners was seen when two of them foundered that night.

During the 7th the British failed to take advantage of the weather gauge which they held; they did not close. Thereafter both fleets manuœvred as if they wished to get together for a fight, but it was not until the 11th, when a fresh wind was blowing, that any shooting was done. With the British to windward, "at 11:15 the action became general and harmless," says Roosevelt, and that describes the situation exactly.

The British fleet was strung out in one line on the port tack heading westerly. Chauncey's ships were on

the lee side in two lines, the smaller and worthless vessels in a line nearer the enemy and the large ones in a parallel line further away. He had given orders to the small vessels to wear away and pass to leeward of his main line as soon as the British fire grew too heavy for them, but two of the little vessels disobeyed orders and tacked up across the British line. It is fair to suppose that the captains of these vessels were in hopes that Chauncey would tack up and force the fighting to protect them. But Chauncey veered off "to lead the enemy down," as he wrote. Sir James Yeo, however, on seeing two vessels within his power, headed up and captured them. With this measure of success he remained satisfied. Chauncey declared that he was not satisfied, but he did not force the fighting as he should have done. If his conduct be judged by that of Perry on Lake Erie, a month later ("To windward or to leeward they shall fight to-day!"), then he was a poor specimen of a naval officer.

On September 11 the fleets got within range again and each captain showed himself well able to keep out of decisive action. On September 28 there was something of a fight. The ship *Pike* and two schooners only were actually engaged. They met the *Wolfe*, the *Royal George*, two brigs and two schooners. The big-gunned *Pike* soon shot away the main and mizzen topmasts and the main yard of the *Wolfe*, the British flagship, and inflicted so much damage on the hull that Sir James made all sail possible and fled into Burlington Bay.

Now, Burlington Bay was an undefended roadstead. Chauncey had only to form his ships in line and sail in to find the British at a disadvantage so great that he might easily have captured them all. But he sailed away. He said in his report that a storm was brewing and he was afraid he would be unable to ride it out on a lee shore, after having beaten the British. The British fleet rode

out the gale, however, and then went to Kingston, where they remained until the ice closed the season.

Of the work on Lake Ontario during the remainder of the war it need only be said that it was done in the shipyards on both sides of the lake. Each commander strove hard to outbuild the fleet of the other, each in turn had a preponderance of force and at such times each said he was much disgusted because the other persistently refused to stand up and fight. The attitude of these commanders is yet of real interest to students of naval warfare; for their type persists. If they were alive now we should find them among those officers who are most earnest in advocating the use of thick armor plate on battleships and most indignant in denouncing all arguments in favor of speedy ships as a craze.

From Ontario the narrative goes to Lake Erie. To regain the control of Lake Erie was to drive the British forces from the northwestern part of the United States and even the western part of Canada. To this end two brig-rigged sloops-of-war and three gunboats were laid down at Erie, Pa., in 1812. In February, 1813, Commander Oliver Hazard Perry, who had been in command of a flotilla of gunboats at Newport, R. I., was ordered to Erie. The road from Buffalo lay across the ice on the lake, a fact worth noting because supplies for the vessels building at Erie had to be transported to the shipyard by means of teams traversing such highways, or worse, as the ice then afforded.

However, on July 23, 1813, Perry reported the five vessels ready for sea. One brig was named the *Lawrence* after the optimistic and much-lamented captain of the *Chesapeake*. The other was named *Niagara*. The three gunboats were named the *Ariel*, the *Scorpion* and the *Porcupine*—and if the *Porcupine* method of warfare be considered it will appear that no better name for a Jeffersonian warship than that could be imagined.

In addition to these Perry had the brig *Caledonia*, together with the merchant schooners *Somers* and *Tigress* and the sloop *Trippe* which he had brought up from Black Rock, all of which were in the fight to come.

The vessels thus prepared were of ample force, but where Commodore Chauncey had agreed that 740 sailors were needed to man the fleet he had provided less than 200. And as he was having trouble on Lake Ontario he was naturally loath to send more. However, he sent up two small squads, "a motley set," large enough to bring Perry's force up to 300, and with these Perry had to be content.

In the meantime Captain Robert Heriot Barclay, a veteran who had served under Nelson, had been appointed to command the British forces that had been collected at the Detroit end of the lake. Barclay was building a ship somewhat larger than Perry's sloops-of-war, but when Perry reported ready she was not yet launched. Barclay had, however, five good vessels in commission, and, learning that Perry's fleet was in a forward state, he came, on July 20, to blockade the port of Erie.

For ten days the British remained in the offing, and then, on July 30, they disappeared. The time for Perry to go to sea had come, but the task was formidable. For across the mouth of the harbor lay a sand-bar on which the water varied in depth from four to six feet, and the distance from deep water to deep water was nearly a mile. Some of Perry's schooners, while loaded, were found to draw too much water for the bar, but all the fleet, except the two brigs, crossed without much difficulty, and then all hands turned to the *Lawrence*. A huge barge, made for the purpose and fitted to the shape of the brig, was secured on each side of her. Both had been filled with water before being thus attached, and when the water was pumped out of them they lifted the brig well up. It

was then possible to float the Lawrence on her way until she reached the shoalest part of the bar—where the water was but four feet deep—when the barges were again filled, the masts were renewed and the brig lifted once more, when she crossed over all and was free.

Of course preparations had been made meantime to resist the enemy should he appear. The smaller vessels were all cleared for action and a battery was built on the beach where the guns would protect the *Lawrence.* These precautions were needed. For while working to get the *Niagara* across on the morning of August 4, Barclay and his fleet came back—just "one day after the fair." On seeing how well Perry was prepared he sailed away to wait for a larger force before fighting.

Though less than half manned, Perry followed Barclay to the mouth of the Detroit River, where he had a look at Amherstburg and saw that the new ship *Detroit,* which Barclay was building, was already launched. Then he sailed back to a roadstead among the Bass Islands that is called Put-in-Bay—near the modern town of Sandusky, Ohio. It was a point from which he could see the enemy, should they leave port, and while lying there on the morning of September 10, 1813, the enemy came.

Perry had nine vessels where the British had six. The British had sixty-three or sixty-four guns where Perry had fifty-four, but some of the British guns were very small, and at close range Perry had an effective broadside of 936 pounds to 459 of the enemy. Perry had 416 men, the British 440. The British ships were of better build in the matter of bulwarks, which in those days supplied to some extent the place of modern armor. The bulwarks protected men from musketry and grape shot. Then the *Detroit,* the British flagship, was provided with seventeen long guns, of which six were long 12-pounders, two were long 24-pounders and one was an 18-pounder. Perry's

OLIVER H. PERRY.

FROM A PORTRAIT AFTER JOHN WESLEY JARVIS IN THE REDWOOD LIBRARY AT NEWPORT, R. I.

flagship carried only two long guns—12-pounders. The long guns of Perry's fleet, save for the four on the two brigs, were carried on open-decked merchantmen. In these modern days of all-big-gun battleships the advantages of the concentration of force as found in the British ship *Detroit* are understood better than they were in the old days, and under the conditions that prevailed in the battle this concentration had a notable influence on the event.

When Perry's lookout saw the enemy a light breeze was blowing from the southwest. The British ships were off to the westward and after Perry got his fleet under way his sailing master called his attention to the fact that as the wind was blowing the British would have the advantage of the weather gauge. The reply that Perry made is worth all the more consideration because of the attention created by his first brief report of the victory that followed. On the statue that ornaments Perry Square at Newport, R. I., for instance, we see in prominent letters the oft-repeated message, "We have met the enemy and they are ours." The vaunt of victory is screamed aloud forever, but the most important words that Perry ever uttered were those of his reply to his sailing master. For when his sailing master said the British would have the weather gauge he replied "*To windward or to leeward, they shall fight to-day.*" Perry would make a spoon or spoil a horn.

Then a huge burgee was brought on deck and displayed so that the sailors could see the words of the last order of the ill-fated Lawrence upon it. "Don't Give Up the Ship!"

"Shall I hoist it?" said Perry.

"Aye, aye, sir," replied the crew with tremendous emphasis, and that is a fact worth recalling because of the great influence of sentiment upon the minds of men in time of battle—in all kinds of battles.

The wind now backed to the southeast and came steadily,

though very gently, from that quarter thereafter. Perry was to have the weather gauge after all.

On seeing Perry come from port, Barclay put his ships in line on the port tack—all heading southwesterly and with sails trimmed so that they made little if any headway, though, of course, they drifted with the wind a little. At the head of the British line was the little schooner *Chippawa*, carrying one 9-pounder. Then came the big *Detroit*, heavily armed as already explained. Astern of her was the little brig *Hunter*, carrying eight guns, 6-pounders and under, and then came the ship *Queen Charlotte*, carrying seventeen guns, of which one (on a pivot) was a long 12-pounder, two were long 9-pounders and the others were short 24-pounders. Astern of the *Queen* was the schooner *Lady Prevost*, carrying three long guns, a 9-pounder and two 6-pounders, with ten short 12-pounders, while the sloop *Little Belt*, with three long guns, ended the line. It is important to note that in the light airs prevailing the British captain was able to place his vessels in a compact line—where each could support the others without in anyway interfering with any other.

To attack this line Perry formed his ships in line, placing the gunboats *Scorpion* and *Ariel* in the van where their long guns, the water being smooth, would be available. The *Lawrence* was placed next and her two long 12-pounders were moved over to fire from the starboard bow. Then came the *Caledonia*, carrying two long 24-pounders and a short 32-pounder, which was a good battery for such a day. The *Niagara* followed the *Caledonia*, being armed as was the *Lawrence*, and she was commanded by Captain Jesse D. Elliott, the officer who had captured the *Caledonia*. The *Somers*, the *Tigress*, the *Porcupine* and the *Trippe* were strung out behind the *Niagara*. Before going into battle Perry had impressed upon the subordinate captains the importance of Nelson's famous saying that no

man could do wrong who laid his ship alongside of one of the enemy, and when the line was formed he headed it for the British flagship, with which he was to engage, aided by the two little vessels ahead. The *Caledonia* was expected to crush the little brig *Hunter* and the *Niagara* was to engage the *Queen Charlotte* at close range so as to crush her. As for the smaller vessels astern of the *Niagara* they were expected to come up as rapidly as possible and join in where most convenient.

With this understanding the American line fanned slowly along, with the intervals between its vessels lengthening out steadily because of the inevitable differences in speed, a condition which Perry could not remedy.

At 11:45, when Perry's ship was more than a mile away, a gun from the British flagship opened the battle. The shot fell short, but one fired at 11:50 struck the *Lawrence.* Perry replied, and then by word passed from vessel to vessel, ordered all the captains astern of him to close up as rapidly as possible and attack the vessels to which they were assigned.

The American line was pointed diagonally toward the flagship of the enemy, and as it drew near every long gun on the British ships was brought to bear on the *Lawrence.* For more than half an hour the British were able to use from twelve to fourteen long guns with deadly effect upon Perry's flagship while Perry had only two long 12-pounders and the three long guns on the gunboats ahead for a return fire. Of course the *Caledonia's* long guns began to reach after a time, but she was assigned to the *Hunter.* For at least half an hour the British fire outweighed the American in ratio of perhaps two to one.

At 12:35 the *Lawrence* arrived where her carronades would reach, though the range—250 yards—was very great for that kind of a gun—and Perry turned her so that her full broadside was used for the first time. His fire

now became destructive and adequate, and if Elliott had placed the *Niagara* alongside the *Queen Charlotte*, as he was in duty bound to do, the battle would have been decided quickly and with relatively small loss of life, although the *Lawrence* had already suffered severely from the fire she had received. But Elliott held the *Niagara* well out of range, and the captain of the *Charlotte*, on seeing that the *Niagara* was not to attack him, left his place in the British line and, making sail ahead, took a position where his full battery could unite with that of his flagship in destroying the *Lawrence*. Thus the two most powerful vessels in the British line were concentrated on the American flagship while the captain of the *Niagara* held aloof deliberately.

It was under such circumstances that Perry's appeal to the sentiment of his crew proved useful. They were fighting under a battle flag on which was written "Don't Give Up the Ship," and they never for a moment forgot it. Gun after gun was dismounted. Whole gun crews were swept away by the storm of grape. Of 103 men fit for duty when the fight began eighty-three were shot down. The rigging was torn to shreds. The hull was cut up so badly that men were killed on the operating table while under the surgeon's hands. Finally a time came when Perry, who was working one of the after guns, found that he had not enough men left to point it. Going to the hatch he asked if there was anyone below who could come on deck, and at that call three of the wounded crawled up the ladder on their hands and knees, and, manning the tackles, hauled the gun out so that it could be fired effectively.

The *Lawrence* was now a beaten ship, drifting helpless, with the breeze. Elliott, who was looking on from a safe distance, then "realized that his commander-in-chief would be destroyed under his eyes, unless he went to his

support, and he himself rest under the imputation of an inefficient spectator" (Mahan). His conduct, as described with his approval in his biography, in later years, was disgraceful, if not criminal. He now made sail ahead, but he was careful yet to keep well up to windward clear of the British short-gun fire. Indeed, as he sailed along the British supposed he was making off to escape from their clutches. On seeing the *Niagara* under increased sail Perry took fresh courage. Dropping a boat over the rail he got into it with four sailors and pulled away to the unharmed brig. As the men rowed a shot passed through the boat, but Perry plugged the hole and the men rowed on until he climbed aboard the *Niagara.* When there he sent Elliott to hasten the movements of the little vessels astern, none of which had yet been under fire, and then turned the *Niagara* around and drove her with her fresh crew and battery into the thick of the battle.

The British ships had succeeded in beating the *Lawrence* —her flag was hauled down after Perry reached the *Niagara*—but they had by no means escaped punishment. The British flagship was but little less hurt than the *Lawrence,* and the *Queen Charlotte* was also well cut up. As the *Detroit* lay almost helpless the *Niagara* sailed across her bows. To avoid the raking an effort was made to wear her around, but as she turned away from the wind she fouled the *Queen Charlotte,* a disaster neither was able to avoid. When these two vessels came together, broadside to broadside, Perry raked them both again and again. To this fire neither was able to answer a gun, and with that, at 3 o'clock, the British surrendered.

Under Perry thirty were killed or mortally wounded and ninety-three were hurt more or less. Of these twenty-two were killed and sixty-one were wounded on the *Lawrence.* The British lost forty-one killed and ninety-four wounded.

It may be worth noting that most curious ideas prevailed among gunners in those days. They really supposed that placing two projectiles in a gun would make it more effective at long range. Some of Perry's short guns were loaded with two 32-pound shot and a round of grape which weighed but little less than a solid shot, over one cartridge of powder that weighed two and a quarter pounds. The ablest tacticians of modern days have expressed approval of Perry's plan of battle but every one smiles at the lack of "horse sense" in the gunners of his day.

By the capture of the entire British fleet the control of the lake was regained beyond dispute. The control of the lake rendered the British occupation of Detroit no longer possible. The British had been operating in northwestern Ohio. They were now driven out of the country and they were followed into Canada, where, on October 5, at a place called Moravian Town, they were routed and dispersed, and their great Indian ally, Tecumseh, was killed. The scalping knife was used no more in Ohio. The guns of the navy brought safety to the women and children—the helpless ones who had been the chief victims of the British invasion—and for fifty years thereafter the people of the region celebrated the 10th of September by picnics and festivals at which they sang with hearty enthusiasm a song that told how

> He pulled off his coat,
> And he plugged up the boat,
> And away he went rowing thro' fire and smoke.

And they listened with a feeling not to be easily described while one of their number read the words of Perry's report to the Navy Department:

"It has pleased the Almighty to give to the arms of the United States a signal victory over their enemies on this lake."

CHAPTER XIII

MINOR BATTLES OF THE WAR

On September 5, 1813, the brig *Enterprise,* Lieutenant William Burrows, captured the British brig *Boxer,* Captain Samuel Blyth, off Penguin Point, near Portland, Maine.

On April 28, 1814, the new sloop-of-war *Peacock,* Captain L. Warrington, captured the British sloop *Epervier,* Captain R. W. Wales, off the coast of Florida. The fights are of small interest for the reason that the American vessels were the more powerful. The *Enterprise* was the lucky little schooner that had done good work in the war with France, but she had been rebuilt and pretty well spoiled. The *Epervier* was taken into the service, but while returning from the Mediterranean, after the war, she disappeared with all hands.

As the reader will remember, Napoleon was crushed at the battle of Waterloo on June 18, 1814. The British were then free to send their whole navy and their veteran troops to the United States. The American people—especially the American navy—had been fighting against great odds from the first, but now the enemy became overwhelming. After augmenting the force operating in the Chesapeake the British army under Major-General Ross and with a naval contingent under Rear-Admiral Cockburn (the whole force numbered 5,000 men) moved against Washington. The land force came by way of the Patuxent. At Bladensburg were posted 7,000 militiamen with 370 sailors and seventy-eight marines. As the

British arrived the militia fled, but the naval men, under Commodore Joshua Barney, a veteran of the Revolution, stood their ground fighting with determination until some of them were bayonetted at the battery they were serving. They inflicted a loss of 216 killed and wounded on the enemy and suffered a loss of 100 in return. But they were, of course, overwhelmed. Having entered Washington, the British, under orders from Rear-Admiral Cockburn, burned the public buildings, together with the newspaper offices and many private buildings. Even the national library, with its records and documents, was burned with the rest. The deed which Omar, the Mohammedan, perpetrated at Alexandria, A. D. 640, was repeated by Rear-Admiral George Cockburn, with Major-General Ross and Vice-Admiral Cochrane consenting. Cockburn was knighted a little later.

The assault made on Baltimore, on September 12–14, which failed, is notable because it inspired Francis S. Key to write the "Star-Spangled Banner."

Memorable in the history of the navy is the story of the *Wasp*, which was built to take the place of the little *Wasp* that was captured after she had beaten the life out of the British sloop *Frolic*. The new *Wasp* sailed from Portsmouth, N. H., under Captain Johnston Blakely, with a crew of 173 men, "almost exclusively New Englanders." She was the only one of our ships afloat in the War of 1812 that carried a picked crew.

On June 28, 1814, while cruising to the southwest of Ireland the *Wasp* met the British brig sloop *Reindeer*, Captain William Manners, a vessel carrying eighteen short 24-pounders, a 12-pounder swivel and two long 6-pounders. The *Wasp* carried two long 12-pounders and twenty short 32-pounders. It is worth noting, to show the difference between the American and the British practice in arming ships in those days, that when an American

ship mounted a swivel-gun it was always a "long Tom" of the largest calibre, while the British used a carronade of the 12-pound or 18-pound size. The modern practice of mounting the heaviest possible guns in turrets has grown out of the American practice of the old days.

Blakely tried to work up and take the weather gauge, but Manners handled the *Reindeer* so well that at 3:17 o'clock P. M he placed her on the weather quarter of the *Wasp* where he opened fire with his 12-pounder swivel. And there he hung until he had fired five times. At 3:26 the *Wasp* was luffed and for ten minutes the broadsides of both ships were worked at the utmost speed, when the superior battery of the *Wasp* and the superior skill of the American gunners proved decisive as usual. The *Reindeer* was shot to pieces so badly that Captain Manners in desperation (he was already mortally wounded) ran his brig alongside the *Wasp* and called for boarders. The men responded, but Captain Manners was shot through the head as he strove to lead his crew, and then the men of the *Wasp* swarmed on board the *Reindeer* and carried her. It was a bloody fight. Of the 173 Americans eleven were killed and fifteen wounded while thirty-three were killed and thirty-four wounded out of 118 on the *Reindeer*.

On September 1 the *Wasp* cut a merchantman out of a fleet of ten ships under the convoy of the British liner *Armada*—a ship too slow for the *Wasp*. At 6:30 o'clock that evening, being then 260 or 270 miles westerly from Brest, Captain Blakely saw four ships ahead of him and made sail in chase of the most weatherly one, which proved to be the brig sloop *Avon*, Captain the Honourable James Arbuthnot. At 7 P. M. the *Avon* began signalling her consorts, while the *Wasp* kept on in chase until the *Avon* opened fire at 8:38. Then she luffed out on the *Avon's* weather quarter and ordered her to heave to. When she refused to do this Blakely ran down under her

lee and opened fire at such short range that a gun wad at one time proved to be an efficient missile. In a brief time the two masts of the *Avon* were shot away and her hull was riddled. But just after she had surrendered, one of her consorts, the sloop *Castillian,* Captain Braimer, came to the rescue, followed by the other two vessels, one of which was the 20-gun sloop *Tartarus.* To prepare for her battle with these fresh ships the *Wasp* now wore around before the wind and began reeving off new braces in place of some that had been cut by the fire of the *Avon.* The *Castillian* fired one broadside at her, but in the meantime the *Avon* was making urgent signals of distress and the *Castillian* went to give her aid. The aid came just in time, for as the last man was taken from her the *Avon* went down.

The *Wasp* had one man wounded—struck by a wad from the *Avon*—and two killed. The *Avon* had ten killed and thirty-two wounded, showing the usual superiority of the American gunner. The three British vessels, after seeing the destruction of the *Avon,* allowed the *Wasp* to depart in peace.

On October 9 the *Wasp* fell in with the Swedish brig *Adonis* and took off two American naval officers who had been on the frigate *Essex* and were now passengers. The *Wasp* was then between 200 and 300 miles west by north from the Cape de Verde group. The *Adonis* alone reported these facts. When the *Wasp* faded from the view of those Swedes she disappeared forever.

During her last cruise in that war the *Constitution* was caught by a hurricane that wrenched her until the carpenter reported to the officer of the deck, Lieutenant William B. Shubrick, that she was sinking.

"Well, sir," replied Shubrick, "as everything in our power is made tight we must patiently submit to the fate of sailors and all of us sink or swim together."

The *Constitution* did not sink, but the words of the gal-

lant Shubrick show how the men of the *Wasp* met their fate.

It was *Constitution* luck to escape the hurricane. There never was a luckier ship than *Old Ironsides*. At 1 o'clock on February 20, 1815, the *Constitution*, being then under Captain Charles Stewart, while running with an easterly breeze well off to the east and north of Madeira, met two British warships that proved to be the light little frigate *Cyane*, Captain Gordon T. Falcon, and the sloop *Levant*, Captain the Honorable George Douglass. The *Constitution* went in pursuit and at 6:10 o'clock that evening came to the wind at a point where she had the *Levant* under her lee bow and the *Cyane* under her lee quarter, and opened fire. For the British captains had determined to fight, and had formed in line to await the *Constitution*. After the battle had raged for fifteen minutes the *Constitution* ceased firing because the enemy were fogged in by the smoke. When smoke cleared away it was seen that the *Constitution* had forged ahead until abreast of the *Levant* while the *Cyane* was luffing up to cross astern and rake. At that Stewart gave the *Levant* a broadside and then backing the main and the mizzen sails of the *Constitution* he drove her stern first back across the course of the *Cyane* and gave her the raking she had intended for the *Constitution*. A little later the *Levant*, which was then out of position for firing, was seen wearing around to come back to the aid of the *Cyane*, but as she turned from the wind Stewart drove the *Constitution* ahead and raked the unfortunate sloop twice. This sent the *Levant* out of the battle to reeve new rigging. As she turned away the *Cyane* also squared away before the wind, as if to escape, when the *Constitution*, being both handier and swifter, was able to turn around more quickly and crossing astern Stewart raked from aft forward and then ranged up on her port quarter, when the British flag was hauled down.

Placing a prize crew in charge of the captured ship, Stewart went in pursuit of the *Levant* and found her coming back to aid the *Cyane!* Of course she was soon compelled to surrender. The *Cyane* lost twelve killed and twenty-six wounded. The *Levant* lost seven killed and sixteen wounded. The *Constitution* lost six killed and nine wounded. The two British ships together threw 763 pounds of metal at a broadside where the *Constitution* threw 704, but the British guns were nearly all carronades; moreover, the division of the British forces between two ships was a disadvantage that is understood much better now than it was then.

Stewart took his prizes to Porto Praya, in the Cape de Verdes. While there, on March 11, during a low-lying fog, the 50-gun frigate *Leander*, Captain Sir Ralph Collier, the 50-gun frigate *Newcastle*, Captain Lord George Stuart, and the 40-gun frigate *Acasta*, Captain Robert Kerr, came into the harbor. The *Newcastle* had been designed to meet the 44-gun American ships and the three frigates had been in search of the *Constitution* for some time. The cables of the American ships were slipped and, favored by the wind and fog, they were able to stand out of the harbor a long gunshot to windward of the British ships, though the latter soon tacked in pursuit. The breeze was fresh from northeast by north. The *Constitution* led in the race with the *Levant* next and the *Cyane* following. The British *Newcastle* was just out of range on the *Constitution's* lee quarter with the *Leander* astern of her and the *Acasta* last of all but working out to windward of the wake of the *Constitution*. In a little time it was seen that the *Cyane* was dropping astern where the British would surely get her and Stewart ordered her to tack—turn away to the northwest. She did so and was allowed to go unpursued. Then the *Levant* was seen to be in a dangerous position and she was ordered to tack.

This she did and then to the astonishment of all the Americans the three huge British frigates tacked after her and allowed the *Constitution* to sail away unmolested.

No adequate explanation of this singular movement was ever made. When Captain Collier was twitted about it ten years later he killed himself. It is not unlikely that the report which Captain Collier made to the Admiralty would clear up the mystery, but beginning in 1813—at about the time they ordered the British frigates to cruise in company, and never to attack an American frigate singly—the Admiralty ceased publishing the reports of captains.

In the meantime the frigate *President* was lost. She went to sea from New York in a gale of wind on February 14, 1815, but struck on a bar on the way out and twisted her hull out of shape and sprung her masts. Then she encountered the British blockading squadron of four frigates on the 15th and led them a race in which she lost. The *Endymion*, a 24-pounder frigate, was the first to get within range. Captain Stephen Decatur, commanding the *President*, made a good running fight. Indeed, he at first tried to get alongside this ship, but she was too swift for him. Then he dismantled her (the "sails were all cut from her yards"), and she was silenced. The delay in doing this, however, enabled the frigates *Pomone* and *Tenedos* to overhaul the *President*, and when these two had arrived within close range Decatur surrendered. A court-martial decided that Decatur was fully justified in doing so, yet it seems certain that John Paul Jones would have fought somewhat longer, in spite of odds.

It is worth noting that after the *President* had been taken to England all stores and other needless weights were removed so that she would float as high as possible out of water. Then she was moored beside an old 74-gun liner that was weighed down to a point where the *President*

would seem to be rather the larger ship. This was done in order that the yokels who came to the navy yard would go away fully convinced that the "Yankee" frigate was really "a line-of-battle ship in disguise."

The sloops-of-war *Hornet*, Captain James Biddle, and the *Peacock*, Captain Lewis Warrington, sailed from New York on January 22, 1815, to join the *President* at Tristan d'Cunha, not knowing that the *President* had been captured. The *Hornet* arrived at the island on March 23 and found the British sloop *Penguin*, Captain James Dickinson, there, looking for a "Yankee" privateer that had been doing much damage to Indiamen. The *Penguin* was a new vessel. She carried sixteen short 32-pounders, two long 12-pounders fitted so that both could be fired from either side, and a short 12-pounder on a pivot. (Report of Captain Biddle who carefully measured her). The *Hornet* carried eighteen short 32-pounders and two long 12-pounders, only one of which could be fired on a side. The crew of the *Penguin* numbered 132; that on the *Hornet*, according to her muster roll, was 121.

The battle began at 1:40 P. M., while both ships sailed along side by side, perhaps sixty yards apart. At the end of fifteen minutes Captain Dickinson, who had the weather gauge, ran down to board the *Hornet* because the *Penguin* was too badly cut up to fight longer in any other way. The ships bumped together, but in the meantime Dickinson had been killed and no serious effort was made to board. When the ships separated the *Penguin's* foremast fell over the rail, and at 2:02 she surrendered. She had lost fourteen killed and twenty-eight wounded, her hull was leaking like a basket and the mainmast was soon to fall. Not a round shot struck the *Hornet's* hull or masts. She lost two killed and ten wounded. The *Penguin*, after a careful survey, was sunk.

The *Peacock* went on to the Straits of Sunda, where she

fell in with the little cruiser *Nautilus*, Lieutenant C. Boyce. Boyce announced that peace had been declared, but Warrington thought that statement a mere ruse to enable the little vessel to get under the guns of a nearby fort, and ordered the flag of the *Nautilus* down. Boyce refused and a broadside was exchanged. The *Peacock* was unhurt, the *Nautilus* lost seven killed and eight wounded.

Peace had been made, but Warrington was justified, of course, in refusing to take the word of the British officer under the circumstances. As the British official histories lay much stress on Warrington's "inhumanity," it is worth noting that Captain Bartholomew, of the British ship *Erebus*, fired a broadside and a number of muskets at an American gunboat, off the coast of Georgia, three weeks after he had received official notice that the war was ended.

Of the work of the privateers in the War of 1812 it must be said that when the balance sheet was struck, it was much more disastrous to the country than that of the Revolution. Very few profitable voyages were made and owners sustained very great losses. The most celebrated voyage of the war was that of the *Rossie*, Captain Joshua Barney—it was celebrated because of the number of ships taken. In a run from Baltimore to Newport she "captured four ships, eight brigs, three schooners and three sloops, valued at over $1,500,000." (McClay's "American Privateers.") Mary Barney, in her biographical memoir of the late Commodore Joshua Barney, says (p. 283) that the cruise "was but little profitable to the numerous individuals who had united to fit her out," and that the Commodore's share of the prize money was only a little more than $1,000.

A few good fights were made by privateers during the War of 1812, of which two should have mention here. On October 11, 1814, the brig *Prince de Neuchâtel*, Captain J. Ordronaux, of New York, while at anchor off Nan-

tucket was attacked by five barges, containing at least 111 men from the British 40-gun frigate *Endymion,* Captain Henry Hope. The privateer had only thirty-eight men on board, but these resisted so desperately that at the end of twenty minutes one barge was sunk, three drifted away with not a man at an oar, while the fifth was captured with its crew of thirty-six men, of whom, however, eight were dead and twenty wounded. From the barge that sank two men were rescued. They reported that she had carried forty-three men, of whom all the others were lost. The British, to minimize their defeat, would admit a loss of only twenty-eight killed and ninety-three wounded. The privateer lost seven killed and twenty-four wounded.

The privateer schooner *General Armstrong,* having anchored in Fayal Harbor, was attacked during the night of September 26, 1814, by 400 men who came from a British squadron that arrived soon after she did. Every boat carried a carronade and these guns were fired as the boats dashed in. The privateer replied with a long 24-pounder and four long 9-pounders, for perhaps two rounds, and then the British swarmed to the rail. There, as an English eye-witness wrote (quoted in "American Privateers"): "The Americans fought more like bloodthirsty savages than anything else. *They rushed into the boats sword in hand* and put every soul to death as far as came within their power. Some of the boats were left without a single man to row them, others with three or four. The most that any returned with was about ten. Several boats floated ashore full of dead bodies."

To call American seamen who were defending their ship "bloodthirsty savages" is characteristic of British histories of conflicts with Americans, especially when, as in this case, the Americans won against great odds. The privateersmen numbered only ninety. The British admitted a loss of but thirty-four killed and eighty-six

wounded. It was, of course, very much larger. The *Armstrong* lost two killed and seven wounded. The British ships finally came within range and then Captain Samuel Reid, commanding, burned the privateer.

CHAPTER XIV

THE LOSS OF THE ESSEX

The story of the frigate *Essex* goes back to the war with France, for the *Essex* was built by the people of Salem, Mass., for use against the hated French, and especially the hated Napoleon. It is said that when first commissioned she was the swiftest, and for her battery (then long 12-pounders) the best frigate afloat. While lying in the Delaware, late in 1812, the *Essex*, under Captain David Porter, was ordered to join the *Constitution* for the cruise in which the *Java* was captured. Failing to find the *Constitution* at the various places of rendezvous appointed, Porter was left off the Brazil coast to cruise as he pleased, and he determined to round the Horn to destroy British commerce in the South Sea. In the course of the year 1813 the British whalers there were all captured or driven into port, and as some of the whalers were armed as letters-of-marque the American ships were saved from British aggressions. Our first admiral—Farragut—served under Porter on this cruise, and was at one time placed in command of a captured ship, though but twelve years old.

Having learned that the British had sent a squadron of three ships to capture the *Essex*, Porter went to a safe harbor where he refitted his ship, and then, instead of sailing for home, as he would have been fully justified in doing, he went hunting the enemy.

Valparaiso was reached early in January, 1814, and on the 8th of that month the British frigate *Phoebe*, Captain

James Hillyar, and the sloop *Cherub*, Captain T. T. Tucker, appeared in the offing just after daylight. Captain Porter had entertained the society people of the town the night before, a third of his crew were on shore, and the gun deck was lumbered up with decorations. Knowing these facts some British sailors rowed off to the *Phoebe* and told Captain Hillyar that the *Essex* was at that moment "safe booty."

Clearing his ship for action Captain Hillyar reached into the harbor and steered within fifteen feet of the weather rail of the anchored *Essex*. He intended to attack the *Essex*, because he believed he had surprised her in an unprepared condition, and as all now agree his coming in beside her in such circumstances was an actual attack. Hillyar had violated the neutrality of the port by doing this. He did not find Porter unprepared, however. As the *Phoebe* steered alongside, kedge anchors were hoisted to the ends of the lower yards of the *Essex* whence they could be dropped upon the *Phoebe* to haul her in closer still, while the men at the guns stood ready to fire, and a well-trained host of boarders mounted to the rail ready to jump to the deck of the enemy under the smoke of the first broadside.

Hillyar had no relish for such a battle. With much agitation he told Porter that nothing hostile was meant by coming in so close, and then he backed his yards and drifted away astern. Although the *Phoebe* had made an attack that not only justified but demanded a fight, Porter let her go, and all that has ever been said in excuse of his doing so was that he "was the very pink of chivalry."

When the two captains met on shore later Hillyar promised faithfully that because of Porter's forbearance no attack should be made upon the *Essex* while in neutral waters. Porter invited Hillyar to meet the *Essex* with the *Phoebe* alone in the offing, but Hillyar declined.

After a time Porter learned that three more British frigates were coming to the coast, and a stiff wind having carried away his cable, on March 28, 1814, he determined to sail at once. Standing out under a press of canvas the *Essex* was struck by a squall of wind off the cape at the south side of the harbor, the topmast was broken short off, and Porter turned back to the harbor to make repairs. Knowing in his heart that he would have kept a promise freely made, he believed that Hillyar would do so, and that the *Essex* would be unmolested when in neutral waters. Farragut ("Life and Letters") says Porter should have squared away before the wind to make repairs, fighting if necessary until this was done. On seeing the *Essex* was crippled and returning to neutral waters Hillyar set all flags on both of his ships and at once went in chase.

The *Essex* at this time was armed with six long 12-pounders and forty short 32-pounders. The *Phoebe,* according to James, carried twenty-six long 18-pounders, four long 9-pounders, fourteen short 32-pounders, with a short 18-pounder and a short 12-pounder that could be fired from either side. The *Phoebe* could fire from her long guns at long range 252 pounds of shot at a broadside. The *Essex* could fire only three of her long 12-pounders in the broadside, but at one time she was able to use the other three from stern ports, so at best, and for a half hour at most, she used all of the six long guns. She opposed a round of sixty-six pounds of shot to the *Phoebe's* 252. At short range the *Phoebe* fired 506 pounds of metal to which the *Cherub* added 342, making a total of 848, while the *Essex* had a broadside weight of 628 pounds by the scales, all American shot being under the nominal weight. These figures are given to show that while the *Essex* had a good enough fighting chance at short range she was at an overwhelming disadvantage when at long range.

The *Essex* having anchored near the beach (the wind had moderated), the *Cherub* sailed in to a point off the starboard bow while the *Phoebe* took a position off the starboard quarter of the American. Both were within carronade range at this time. At 3:54 o'clock (*Essex* time) the enemy opened fire. At that time not one of Porter's guns would bear on the *Phoebe*, but he made it hot for the *Cherub* and within a brief time he got the three long 12-pounders from the off side of the bow back to his cabin where he worked them through stern ports. Thus for ten minutes, according to Hillyar's account, and half an hour, according to Porter, the *Essex* opposed three guns and no more to the entire broadside of the *Phoebe*. At the end of that time, Hillyar wrote, "appearances were a little inauspicious." In spite of the odds in their favor both British ships were obliged to haul off to make repairs.

However, with new rigging in place, Hillyar returned to the battle. The *Phoebe* was once more placed on the starboard quarter of the *Essex*, but she was further forward so that the long 12-pounders in the stern ports of the *Essex* could not be brought to bear, and at the same time she was so far off that the short guns on the *Essex* could not reach. The *Cherub* then approached near enough to fire a few shot from her long 9-pounders, but her work was of little moment from this time on. The gunners of the *Phoebe*, however, worked as if at target practice, for they were unannoyed by a return fire. The first lieutenant of the *Phoebe* protested that shooting the *Essex* to pieces in that way was sheer murder, but Hillyar replied that he was there to capture the *Essex* with the least risk possible.

Many of the guns on the *Essex* were dismounted, and the gun's crews were slaughtered. Three crews —fifteen men—were killed at one gun alone. The rigging was cut aloft until the only running rope remaining

was the halliard of the flying jib. The hull was hit more frequently than any other American hull in any salt-water battle of that war, except the *Chesapeake*. Seeing, at last, that the *Phoebe* had anchored, Porter in his desperation slipped his cable. He had but one sail that he could control—the flying jib—and that he hoisted, while the others were left dangling in shreds from the yards. The *Phoebe* at that moment had not less than 289 fighting men, while the *Essex* had no more than 150 fit to handle the cutlass, but with the American crew—even those who were dying under the surgeon's knife shouting "Don't give her up, Logan!" and "Hurrah for Liberty!"—Porter headed for the enemy determined to lead his men to her decks. In the meantime his whole broadside did for a few minutes reach out with effect.

Hillyar had been trained in the school of Nelson wherein it was taught that "No captain can do wrong if he places his ship alongside an enemy." But when he saw the *Essex* coming with her rags flapping in the air, and the blood flowing from her scuppers, he slipped his cable and fled from the cripple. His first lieutenant had been killed; there was no one to protest.

In the early days of the war (August 13, 1812) when the British sloop *Alert* fell in with the *Essex*, the crew of the British ship cheered for joy at the thought of fighting an American frigate. When the *Constitution* was sailing down on the *Guerrière*, Captain Dacres at first refused to believe that she was an American ship, because, as he said, she came down too boldly for a ship manned by such people. The captain of the sloop *Little Belt* supposed that he had compelled the frigate *President* to "stand away" from his little vessel. But after less than two years of sea fighting a British captain was found declining a yard-arm encounter, though the Americans were then of much less than half his force.

This is not to say, however, that Hillyar did wrong. It was his imperative duty to capture the *Essex* with the least possible loss. He showed common sense but neither the "chivalry" nor the "uncircumspect gallantry" of which it was the habit of British writers to make boast.

While the *Phoebe* fled she kept her long guns working, and Porter, seeing that he could not close, turned back intending to run his ship ashore and burn her. Here again he was foiled, for the wind baffled him. Then, as he anchored again the *Essex* took fire, and hope fled. Those who could swim were told that they might try to reach the shore, and many took advantage of the opportunity. Those who remained put out the fire and then at 6:20 o'clock the flag was hauled down.

Out of 255 men on the *Essex* when the battle began fifty-eight were killed, sixty-six were wounded and thirty-one were drowned in trying to swim ashore. The British lost five killed (including Lieutenant William Ingram, of the *Phoebe*) and ten wounded.

For the good of the service it is necessary to point out that Porter and Lawrence were guilty of making most serious errors. Inspired by "chivalry," Lawrence refused to rake the *Shannon* when he had opportunity, while Porter, animated by the same idea, allowed the *Phoebe* to escape from his grasp in the harbor of Valparaiso. Very likely the *Shannon* would have captured the *Chesapeake* even had Lawrence raked her, but it was a serious error to fail to take any advantage. In like manner the error of Porter cost him his ship, many of his crew lost their lives and others endured untold suffering. If any American naval officer is ever again guilty of such "chivalry," a court-martial should inflict on him the just penalty for neglect of duty in the presence of the enemy.

Nevertheless, when we consider the effect of the battles of these two officers upon the country—especially the

effect upon the standing of the nation among the other Powers of the world—it appears that the "chivalry" was, perhaps, worth its price. For, as has already been pointed out, the nation had been dominated by the policy of "peaceable coercion" until the people of Europe looked upon all Americans as contemptible cowards. Worse yet, that policy had actually developed among our people a habit of thought through which they would weigh "interest"—commercial gains—against honor. Men had been taught to think they might do anything, however dishonest or contemptible, or endure anything, however disgraceful, if they could thereby serve their "interest." It was through this habit of thought that, when they came to fight, they put "free trade" ahead of "sailors' rights" in the slogan of the war. Nothing less than a war could raise the nation out of that slough. While they fought a second war for liberty they were also creating a character as a people. For the sake of a standing in the community of nations it was necessary to prove that Americans were not cowards; for the sake of the future of the country it was necessary to set up some other national idea than one founded on "interest" only. In this point of view it appears that the combat between the *Chesapeake* and the *Shannon* was something more than a display of battle tactics, and that Porter's work at Valparaiso was memorable in the annals of our navy.

There was one other feature of the battle of Valparaiso that needs special emphasis. When Porter wished to get alongside of the enemy he was unable to do so because his ship had not enough power to give her the needed speed. In modern days a naval officer is heard to say, here and there, that the popular demand for speed in American warships is a "craze," and that the quality most needed in a fighting ship is the ability "to stay in the battle line." Porter had plenty of guns with which to "stay

in the battle line"; what troubled him was that he couldn't get into the battle line. If we are to invite the enemy to come to our harbors to do the fighting, in our next war, and, when there, to choose his range and time of fighting, then speed is a matter of no consequence. But the men of the navy who can be trusted to force the fighting in time of battle are a unit in demanding ships that will have power to reach the fighting line, and when there, will have guns to demonstrate the truth of the words of Farragut: "The best protection against the enemy's fire is a well-directed fire from our own guns."

CHAPTER XV

ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN

Brief consideration will show the vast importance to the nation of the victory on Lake Champlain, obtained on September 11, 1814. As already noted, Napoleon had fallen and the victories of the allied armies in Europe had released the British in overwhelming force for service in America. More than 18,000 men were concentrated in Canada, and 11,000 of these soldiers, with "a proportionate and most excellent train of artillery," were ordered to invade the United States by the way of Lake Champlain, the old Northern Gateway.

The character of the men in this army is worth recalling. Said Wellington, who had commanded but failed to restrain them in Europe: "It is impossible to describe to you the irregularities and outrages committed by the troops. . . . There is not an outrage of any description that has not been committed on a people who have uniformly received them as friends." And Napier in describing the sacking of Badajos by these veterans says: "Shameless rapacity, brutal intemperance, savage lust, cruelty and murder, shrieks and piteous lamentations, groans, shouts, imprecations, . . . resounded for two days and nights in the streets of Badajos."

These veterans, who as Napier says, "shamed the most ferocious barbarians of antiquity," were come to subjugate the American people who had been driven to war by long years of oppression—an oppression made possible by the might of a great navy that was unopposed. Washington

had already been captured, and its prominent buildings, including the National Library, had been burned. The Chesapeake was open to the enemy. The territory of Maine as far as the Penobscot had been occupied by the British. Another great British army was on the way to New Orleans. The two invasions were planned to hold so much of the territory of the United States as had been occupied in the East, and to add the whole valley of the Mississippi in the West. Rarely has a battle been fought for so great a stake as that of Lake Champlain in the War of 1812. And yet as the British force, more than 11,000 strong, advanced toward Lake Champlain, the American Secretary of War ordered the general in command at Plattsburg to take the major part of the troops there to Sacket Harbor for operations against Kingston, leaving 1,500 "effectives" under Brigadier-General Alexander Macomb to meet the British hosts that were advancing under Sir George Prevost.

In the meantime, however, Commander Thomas Macdonough had been sent (1813) to the lake to create a naval force with which to defend the old route of the invader. He had built a fleet which, when ready for battle, included the ship-rigged corvette *Saratoga* of 734 tons, the brig *Eagle* of 500 tons (she was built in nineteen days), the schooner *Ticonderoga* of 350 tons and the sloop *Preble* of 80 tons. There were also ten gunboats that were of no great use in the battle, making a flotilla of 2,244 tons that carried eighty-six guns able to throw 1,194 pounds of shot at a broadside of which 480 were from long guns and 714 from short.

To meet this the British provided a frigate of more than 1,200 tons, named the *Confiance*, the brig *Linnet* of 350 tons, the sloops *Chubb* and *Finch* of 112 and 110 tons respectively, besides twelve gunboats. In all there were sixteen vessels of 2,402 tons, throwing 1,192 pounds of shot

at a broadside, of which 660 pounds were from long guns and 532 from short. The advantage from the long guns was very greatly increased by the fact that the frigate carried thirty long 24-pounders in the broadside and another on a pivot. She also carried six short guns that were either 32-pounders or 42-pounders. The long-gun broadside of the British frigate was but ninety-six pounds short of the entire long-gun broadside of the entire American fleet, and this lack was exactly made up by the long-gun broadside of the British brig *Linnet*, that carried sixteen long 12-pounders.

Even these figures do not adequately set forth the superiority of the British fleet, for the superior broadside of the *Confiance* was a matter of the greatest importance because the battle was fought at a range where the short guns were ineffective even if they could reach. When the British frigate and brig concentrated their fire on the *Saratoga* they were throwing 480 pounds of long-gun metal where the *Saratoga* could send but ninety-six in return. It was under those odds that Macdonough fought a considerable part of the battle, the *Eagle* and the *Ticonderoga* being kept busy by the smaller British vessels.

This concentration of force is well understood in these modern days of battleships, and it was well enough understood by Captain George Downie to induce him to say that the *Confiance* was alone a match for the whole American squadron. And so she should have been, if properly handled.

Thomas Macdonough, when the British came to Lake Champlain, was thirty years old. The daring of youth was still in his heart, but it was "the intelligent forethought with which he provided for the chances of battle" that made him great. In the gorge where Lake Champlain lies the wind always comes from the north or the south. Macdonough saw that the British ships, being

COMMODORE THOMAS MACDONOUGH.

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square-rigged, could not beat up from the Sorel River against a wind from the south; they would have to come with a fair wind.

With this fact in mind Macdonough placed his fleet in line from Crab Island northward into Plattsburg Bay. The *Eagle* was at the north end of the line and just within or west of the point of Cumberland Head. South of the *Eagle* and a hundred yards from her was the *Saratoga*, with the *Ticonderoga* next and the little sloop *Preble* last of all. The gunboats were scattered between the larger vessels, the smaller ones lying at the south end of the line and the larger at the north where the weight of the attack was expected. These vessels were lying with their heads to the north, for the wind was northerly, but each had springs (extra hawsers) leading from stern to cable in such a way that the broadside might be turned to and fro as occasion might demand. On the *Saratoga* Macdonough arranged anchors at bow and stern, with kedges off both bow and stern in such fashion that in case of need he could turn her clear around, regardless of sails or wind, and present a fresh battery to the enemy.

On September 6 Sir George Prevost, with his Wellington "Invincibles," came to the Saranac River. The American army there had been increased by volunteers and militia, but it still numbered only about one-third as many as the British force; and it was at best but a scrub army against the veterans from Badajos. Without the navy to support them they would have been swept away like the leaves of the mountains before an Adirondack gale. But with Macdonough's ships in the offing Sir George sat down and waited five days for Captain Downie and the British fleet.

Sunday, September 11, 1814, was a most beautiful day in the most delightful season of the Adirondack year. The warm sun was tempered by a north-east breeze that

made mere existence a pleasure, and the forest-clad mountains were just beginning to show the colors of the autumn foliage. It was a day when the people of the region would naturally leave their homes to wander over the hills, and on this day, without exception, save the sick and their nurses, every non-combatant in all that region did go out to the hilltops.

Never in the history of the region—not even in the days of Indian and Tory raids—was there a day of more intense anxiety than this beautiful Sabbath morning. For the northerly breeze was sure to bring the British fleet. While the sailors on the ships thought most of defending the "gridiron flag," the militia, crouching behind the forts and within the stone walls of the old mill on the banks of the river, knew they were to fight for their homes and their wives and daughters. "They well knew that the men they were to face were very brave in battle, and very cruel in victory. They feared not for themselves; but in the hearts of the bravest and most careless there lurked a dull terror of what that day might bring upon those they loved."

Off the point of Cumberland Head lay a "Yankee" cutter, well manned, and with its bow pointed toward the "Yankee" flagship—a lookout waiting for the enemy. As eight o'clock drew nigh, the people on the hills saw its seamen bend to their oars and drive it with signals flying into the bay. The enemy were coming. The long roll of the drums called to quarters on the anchored squadron, and then the white new sails of the British frigate appeared over the lower parts of Cumberland Head.

Below the point of Cumberland Head the British fleet turned around to head to the north, and lay there, for a time, while Captain Downie examined the American line and sent orders to his own ships. Then he placed his ships in line abreast—side by side—and about as far apart as those under Macdonough, with the little sloop *Chubb*

and the brig *Linnet* at the north side of the *Confiance*, and the sloop *Finch* and the twelve gunboats at the south. The *Chubb* and the *Linnet* were to attack the *Eagle*, the *Confiance* was to lie athwart the bow of the *Saratoga* while the *Finch* and the gunboats were to turn the south end of the American line and as they did so dispose of the *Preble* and *Ticonderoga*.

When everything was ready the British filled their sails, and with the wind abeam, or perhaps a little abaft the beam, they reached in—heading a little north of west, for the American line.

As the enemy advanced, Macdonough, "who feared his foes not at all, and his God a great deal, knelt for a moment with his officers on the quarter-deck." Thereafter the men of the American squadron awaited in perfect silence while the enemy came on, cheering in anticipation of victory, until a chance shot from the British brig *Linnet* came on board the *Saratoga*. A sailor on this ship "had obtained by hook or crook" a fighting cock of great repute in Plattsburg, and this shot knocked to pieces the coop in which the bird was confined. Undismayed, the rooster flew into the rigging, flapped its wings with tremendous vigor and then crowed loud and long. At that the crew of the *Saratoga* whooped, laughed, shouted and cheered. The rooster prepared them well for the fight.

The *Eagle* fired the first gun, but it was while the enemy were yet out of range. Then Macdonough carefully aimed one of his long 24-pounders and fired it. The shot struck the *Confiance* in the bow and ranged aft along the main deck, killing and wounding several men. The *Confiance* at this was heading directly towards the broadside of the *Saratoga*. Then the other long guns in the American fleet were brought into play, and in a short time Captain Downie concluded to anchor where he would not be within the zone of any more guns. Captain Pring, com-

manding the *Linnet*, said that Downie was unable to sail in further because of the failure of the wind, but the fact is that the *Linnet*, though further under the lee of Cumberland Head, was able to sail on without material difficulty. Downie anchored at a range estimated by Macdonough at 300 yards and by Pring at 400 yards. He had seen that Macdonough had only four long 24-pounders in a broadside, and knowing his own superiority in that respect he seems to have determined to take advantage of it, as it was his duty to do. Having laid his ship with her side toward the *Saratoga*, he had every gun carefully aimed, and then at 9 o'clock fired a broadside, every shot of which hit the hull of the American flagship. The blow shook her violently and laid 100 men on deck, of whom forty were killed or badly wounded. Only a few more such broadsides were needed to sink the *Saratoga*, but Downie was so sure of his prey that he turned a number of the guns upon the *Eagle*, which had put the sloop *Chubb* out of the fight with a single broadside—had utterly disabled her so that she hauled down her flag. Turning on the *Eagle* was an error. Another error was a failure to note that at the first discharge of the broadside of the *Confiance* the shock of the recoil lowered the breech of every gun down the wedge supporting it. The muzzle was elevated and the next round struck the upper part of the bulwarks of the *Saratoga*. On the American ships the guns were secured so that the recoil did not affect the aim. Of course the British gunners rectified their error in some cases, but only in a few.

While the chief weight of the fighting was done at the north end of the line the British sloop *Finch* and the gunboats swarmed in around the little *Preble* and soon drove her away, together with the gunboats that were supposed to support her. Then the *Finch* got under the broadside of the *Ticonderoga* and was so badly disabled that she drifted ashore on Crab Island, where she surrendered.

The flight of the *Preble* was thus balanced, but in the meantime the crews of the British gunboats had been gaining in confidence, and in spite of the distress of the *Finch* they made a most determined attack upon the *Ticonderoga*, not only firing their twelve long guns into her at short range but dashing in alongside, intending to carry her by boarding.

By this time (10 o'clock) the combined guns of the *Confiance* and the *Linnet* had proved too much for the *Eagle* and she was obliged to make sail and reach down to a place just to the south of and behind the *Saratoga*, where she anchored once more and opened on the *Confiance* with a fresh battery. The entire battery of the *Confiance* was then turned upon the *Saratoga*, and the *Linnet*, having the *Eagle* no longer within range, also turned on the *Saratoga*, and for this purpose took a station whence she could rake the unfortunate American without receiving a shot in return.

Macdonough had been firing deliberately and with precision at the *Confiance*, but under the cross fire of the two ships of the enemy every gun on the fighting side of the *Saratoga* was disabled and she was set on fire by red-hot shot that the *Confiance* was fitted to use. It was when the guns of the *Saratoga* had been all disabled that the British gunboat crews dashed in against the *Ticonderoga* in their most determined effort to capture her. The supreme moment of the battle had come.

With sword in hand Captain Cassin stormed to and fro along the taffrail of the *Ticonderoga*, directing his crew in the work that held the enemy's flotilla in check, while Macdonough called his men from their useless guns, slipped his anchor, manned the ropes that led to the kedges and, turning his ship around, brought the fresh battery to bear. Captain Downie had been killed, meantime, but as the *Saratoga* was wound around, the first lieutenant of the

Confiance tried to wind her in like fashion. But he had no kedges out and the wind had now died away entirely. He was able to swing her until she lay end on toward the *Saratoga* and there she hung, unable to bring a gun to bear while Macdonough's men raked her from end to end as if she were a target. No crew, for any length of time, could stand such a fire, and at about 11 o'clock the British flag was hauled down. The gunboats had already been driven from the *Ticonderoga* by the work of Captain Cassin. The guns of the *Saratoga* were therefore turned upon the *Linnet* and at 11:20 she, too, surrendered.

As the battle was growing, the wind, as said, died down entirely, and the smoke of the guns arose in the still air until every ship was fogged from the view of the non-combatants who had flocked to the hills. Thereafter they looked on in silent awe, hearing the thunderous reports of the guns, but seeing only the faint glow of the flames through the growing cloud until the time came when the last shot was fired. The silence that followed was harder to bear even than the sounds of battle, for none could tell how the fight had gone, and with bated breath they gazed while the smoke drifted from around the ships, revealing the tops of such spars as were yet standing. Then a wide-eyed patriot, standing on Cumberland Head, saw that the Stars and Stripes only floated in the smoke-laden air, and with a shout that was heard all over the hill proclaimed the news of the "Yankee" triumph. A hundred throats about him took up the cry. It was echoed by a thousand voices from the hills across the bay and beyond the lake. The troops down in the valley of the Saranac took up the shout with such savage cries as were not to be misunderstood. They had withstood the onslaught that had been made upon them by Wellington's "Invincibles," and victory was now assured to them. Sir George Prevost, the commander of the British army, also heard, and "with extreme morti-

fication," too, the "shout of victory from the American works." To his mind the "farther prosecution of the service was become impracticable," and when night came on, thick and dark with an Adirondack storm, the British army fled.

The British gunboats escaped; the British ships were captured. The Americans lost fifty-two killed and wounded. The number of lost on the British side was concealed. The Americans found 270 killed and wounded on the captured ships. The British total loss was therefore certainly above 300. As showing the relative skill of the gunners it was found that the *Saratoga* had fifty-five shot holes in her hull and the British frigate 105. As Roosevelt says: "Macdonough in this battle won a higher fame than any other commander of the war. He had a decidedly superior force to contend with; and it was solely owing to his foresight and resource that he won the victory. His personal prowess had already been shown at the cost of the rovers of Tripoli, and in this action he helped to fight the guns as ably as the best sailor. His skill, seamanship, quick eye, readiness of resource and indomitable pluck are beyond all praise. Down to the time of the Civil War he is the greatest figure in our naval history."

The battle of Lake Champlain was fought at an opportune time. The American Administration had been eager to make peace, commissioners had been sent to Europe for that purpose, and they had been instructed to "omit any stipulation on the subject of impressment," if they thought it necessary to do so in order to obtain peace. The whole attitude of the Administration was one of supplication for peace. The British naturally reached out to claim the territory they already occupied in Maine as well as land that they expected to occupy. But when the story of the battle of Lake Champlain reached Europe the British contention was dropped. The battle of Lake

Champlain preserved the integrity of the national domain.

To sum up the whole story of the war, one sees now that it proved to be worth its cost. Since the guns of the *Constitution* splintered the wooden walls of the *Guerrière* no American has ever flinched at the sight of a foreign warship—no Congressman has ever dared insult his people by asserting that "the idea of our meeting Great Britain on the ocean is too ludicrous to be repelled by serious argument." Moreover, it was necessary that the theory of "peaceable coercion" should have full trial, that its absurdity, and the detestable ideal upon which it was based, might be fully exposed. We lost much, but we obtained peace with honor, and we did it in such fashion upon the sea as to compel all nations to respect the "gridiron flag," even through a civil war.

CHAPTER XVI

DEVELOPMENT OF SHIPS AND GUNS IN THE OLD NAVY

After the War of 1812 the navy saw little real fighting until the Civil War. There was an expedition to the Mediterranean on account of trouble with Algiers, but the presence of the American fleet inclined the barbarian to peace after two of his warships had been captured. Then, while the Spanish-Americans were fighting for freedom from Spanish rule, the waters of the West Indies became infested with pirates. Fifteen small vessels, including one steamer called the *Sea Gull*, were added to the navy for use in hunting these pirates. It was most thankless work. Moreover, a fourth of all the men who were on the station at one time died of the yellow fever. It was not until 1826, when the independence of the Spanish-Americans had been fully attained, that the trouble ended. As for the War with Mexico, the navy lost its only opportunity for real distinction when the commanding officer in the Gulf failed to attack and capture the castle at Vera Cruz. The most interesting feature of our naval history in the period between 1815 and 1861 is the story of the development of the ships and guns.

The naval battles of the War of 1812 were fought between ships of the sail, but a battle between a steamer and a fleet of blockaders was missed by only a narrow margin of time. The fact that the British with their preponderance of sea forces were able to blockade the Atlantic coast

of the United States at will, and the further fact that New York suffered continually, led to the building of the first steam warship in any navy. Late in 1813 Robert Fulton, who had, as early as 1807, demonstrated the commercial success of steam navigation in the merchant marine, proposed to build a steam warship, and Congress, on March 9, 1814, authorized the construction of "one or more floating batteries," fit to "destroy any of the ships of the enemy that may approach the shores or enter the waters of the United States."

Considering the state of the mechanical arts a very good battleship was built, for she had timber walls so thick that no gun could penetrate them; a single paddle wheel, concealed within the hull, drove her at five and one-half knots an hour, and she had a battery that was fit for a fight with a squadron. Fulton named her the *Demologos,* but she is known to the navy list as *Fulton the First.*

Unhappily for the development of naval power this steamer was not completed in time to take any part in the war; and after having been kept as a receiving ship at the Brooklyn navy yard until July 4, 1829, she was destroyed by the explosion of her magazine.

That no other steamers were built for the navy in the years immediately following the War of 1812 is explained in part by the conservatism of the naval men, and in part by the confidence in ships of the sail which the battles of that war had created among the people of the nation. The men of the navy loved their ships—particularly those that, like the *Constitution,* had done good service—with an affection that no landsman can comprehend. They asked for no higher opportunity for glory than to command one of them in a battle with an enemy. Accordingly, battleships of eighty guns or more and a few frigates were launched at intervals—three battleships were sent afloat

in 1820, for instance, and as late as 1848 the old *Vermont* was added to the navy.

The use that was made of the little 100-ton steamer *Sea Gull* by Commodore Porter in the pirate war did not change the prevailing opinion in the matter of steamers, though Porter was one of the unusually progressive men who saw the advantages that steam would give to a fighting ship, and it was he that commanded the *Fulton the First* in her trial trips.

However, in 1835 Secretary of the Navy Mahlon Dickerson observed that an act of Congress in the year 1816, long forgotten by most men, authorized the construction of a steam warship, and he wrote to the Board of Naval Commissioners requesting them to begin work on such a vessel immediately. On May 18, 1837, the hull for this steamer was launched at the Brooklyn navy yard. Then engines that developed 625 horse-power and drove her at a sustained speed of twelve knots an hour were installed. When tested in a race with the British transatlantic steamer *Great Western*, the new warship won. This, properly speaking, was the first ship of the steam navy of the United States. That is to say, because of the success attained in her the naval list has contained steamers ever since. Moreover, new classes of men were added to the *personnel* of the navy—the engineers and firemen. Captain Matthew C. Perry, a brother of the hero of Lake Erie, superintended the building of this ship, and he also hired, and arranged for the standing, of the engine-room force among the other officers and men of her crew. Mr. Charles H. Haswell, of New York, was her chief engineer, and the first engineer of our steam navy.

Then Congress, by the act of March 3, 1839, authorized "the construction of three steam vessels-of-war, on models that shall be most approved." The side-wheel steamers *Mississippi* and *Missouri*, sister ships, each displacing

3,220 tons, were constructed under this act. They were completed in 1842. The *Missouri* was destroyed by an accidental fire at Gibraltar on August 26, 1843. The *Mississippi* had a long and brilliant career. She was the flagship of the naval forces in the Gulf of Mexico during the war with Mexico, and she was Captain M. C. Perry's flagship when he was negotiating his famous treaty with Japan. But, like the *Missouri*, she was at last destroyed by fire, though it was in battle—when with Farragut she was trying to pass the Confederate batteries at Port Hudson, on the Mississippi River.

In the meantime the screw propeller had begun to work as great a revolution in warships as steam was working in the old methods of driving such vessels. John Ericsson had tried a screw-driven steamer on the Thames River, England, but the Lords of the Admiralty who saw it were convinced that even if a large ship could be driven by such a contrivance, the rudder would not steer her. Then Ericsson came to America, under the influence of Captain Robert F. Stockton, of the navy, and here the steam sloop-of-war *Princeton*, with a screw propeller instead of paddle wheels, and with her engines entirely below the water-line, was built after his plans. This was the first screw warship ever built, as the *Fulton the First* was the first steam warship.

But while our navy thus led the way in the evolution of the modern ship nothing was done toward the evolution of a navy, properly speaking. The development of a *personnel* for the coming steam navy—a matter of more importance than the building of ships—was apparently unthought of. The Mexican war had no influence on the development of steam warships; for Mexico had no navy, and sailing ships with such few steamers as we had, and were able to improvise, served well enough.

To Congress and the people the navy seemed to be of

ample strength, and it was therefore neglected. In the meantime, however, the British Government was unceasingly reaching out for more possessions on the American Continent. The Mosquito Territory in Nicaragua was claimed as a part of British Honduras. The weakness of our navy made any assertion of the Monroe Doctrine absurd in European eyes. The discovery of gold in California, and the consequent enormous increase of trade and travel across the narrow parts of the Continent, developed a rivalry of interests in Central America to a degree that threatened war. San Juan del Norte, Nicaragua (called Greytown by the British), on the San Juan River, was occupied by British forces. Tigre Island, in the Gulf of Fonseca, Honduras, a point that commanded the Pacific end of a proposed canal, was seized on the pretense that Honduras had refused to pay a debt. British warships were always found where needed to enforce British pretensions.

Another source of trouble was found in the attempt of John F. T. Crampton, the British minister to the United States, to carry on recruiting for the British forces during the Crimean War. Crampton was assisted by British consuls in New York, Philadelphia and Cincinnati. Although he was personally very popular among the American officials at Washington he showed a contempt for the laws of the United States that was characteristic of his class in former times, and the Secretary of State required him to leave the country. "The incident created much excitement in England," says Foster ("A Century of American Diplomacy"), "and its press demanded the dismissal of the American minister at London."

Moreover, during all the years following the War of 1812 the British writers who referred to the American people invariably did so in terms presumably chosen to keep alive international animosities. The fact that a historian like

James, or a traveller like Dickens, or a hundred others, expressed prejudice, or even malice, was, of course, a matter of no consequence. But the plainly seen fact (it is not yet altogether lost to view, unhappily) that books about Americans were popular with all British readers in the exact measure in which "Yankee" peculiarities were denounced or ridiculed, was serious because it showed a state of feeling among the people of Great Britain which, under the stimulation of some such incident as the Crampton affair, might easily have led to war.

The need of an American navy, able not only for harbor defence but for the protection of American interests at least as far away as the coasts of Nicaragua, was apparent.

In consequence of this need Congress, by the act of April 6, 1854, provided for the construction, "at as early a day as practical," of "six first-class steam frigates, to be provided with screw propellers, and armed and equipped for service." There was an ominous sound in the last sentence quoted, for "service" meant "war." Later five steam sloops were ordered in much the same terms, and then, as the trouble was not settled, seven more steam sloops were provided for, "which ships shall combine the heaviest armament and greatest speed compatible with their character and tonnage."

The discussions in Congress, particularly that in the Senate on March 3, 1856, show that these warships were ordered because war was impending, and that war impended because we did not have an adequate navy.

The ships were built "at as early a day as practical," they were armed with the best guns in the world, and (when ready) they were the ablest fighting ships in the world. Because of the building of these most efficient ships the war was avoided.

Before describing these new frigates and sloops the story of the navy gun must be told.

We fought the War of 1812 with ships that carried for their most effective guns a smooth-bore cannon with a bore between five and six inches in diameter, throwing a spherical cast-iron ball that weighed nominally twenty-four pounds. The use of a 24-pounder on a frigate was a distinct advance in efficiency on the practice of the day. After the war we substituted 32-pounders—guns with a bore six inches, or a trifle more, in diameter—for the 24-pounders, and even our smallest sloops-of-war carried guns of this calibre. Ships-of-the-line were armed with 42-pounders, but these were not strikingly more efficient than the 32-pounders.

In 1837 the French adopted a gun that threw a shell twenty-two centimetres (8.7 inches) in diameter in place of solid shot. Mortars throwing shells had been in use for many years, but these guns threw shells horizontally. The use of shell guns then spread to the British navy, and an eight-inch gun that weighed from fifty-three hundred-weight to sixty-five hundred-weight became very popular, while a ten-inch gun of eighty-two hundred-weight was introduced later. Following this European lead an eight-inch gun was introduced into the American navy in 1841, but the 32-pounder remained the chief reliance of our service even when, some time later, a ten-inch gun, on the British pattern, was made. Happily for the peace of the country these guns that were but imitations proved unsatisfactory, and experiments were made which led to real improvements during the years when the need of superior weapons for the preservation of peace became indisputably apparent.

Beginning in 1841 Colonel George Bomford sought to determine the rending power of the powder in a cannon by boring holes through the metal at intervals from muzzle to breech and placing pistol balls in these holes as made. The force with which each pistol ball was expelled, when

the cannon was fired, was measured by half-inch boards secured within range of the ball. Having learned by this method and an improvement on it the force of the powder gases at many points in the bore, it was assumed that the thickness of the gun metal at that point should be in proportion to this power. But no guns were designed on that theory until 1850, when Lieutenant John A. Dahlgren submitted plans (January 9) for one that was immediately cast. It had a calibre of nine inches. An eleven-inch gun was ordered on April 30, 1851.

The 9-inch gun, made on this symmetrical model, used a solid shot weighing ninety pounds or a shell weighing seventy-four pounds, with a powder charge of thirteen pounds. The initial velocity of the shell was 1,320 feet per second and the muzzle energy was 847 foot-tons. The gun weighed 9,000 pounds. To this the carriage added 1,300 pounds, and it was supposed by the conservative naval men of the world that 10,300 pounds was too great a weight for a gun's crew to handle. But it was found when the guns had been in use for a time that even the 11-inch gun that weighed 16,000 pounds and fired a shot weighing 166 pounds, and a shell of 136, was not too much for the strength of our naval men.

A type of the frigates that were built during the days of impending trouble with England was the *Merrimac*. When completed (1856) she was sent, under Captain E. J. Pendergrast, over to England, and was examined by the naval officers at Southampton. They found her (as described by Sir Howard Douglas) a ship of 3,197 tons, "pierced for sixty guns," though carrying but forty. The forty included two 10-inch pivot guns, sixteen 8-inch shell guns of the old European pattern and twenty-four 9-inch Dahlgrens. The next year the *Niagara*, a much larger ship, appeared in the Thames, where "the beautiful lines of her dark hull showed to great vantage." She was fitted

for a battery of twelve 11-inch Dahlgrens, and the British supposed these guns to have an effective range of 7,000 yards.

The type of the sloops built was the *Hartford*, a ship of 1,990 tons, carrying twenty-two 9-inch Dahlgrens in her broadside batteries.

In all four 40-gun frigates that looked as if pierced for sixty guns, and fourteen smaller ships that were also armed with the Dahlgren guns, were constructed between 1854 and 1858. It was in the days when steam was considered an auxiliary power—they had full sail areas and could make from eight to twelve knots an hour only under steam.

Great Britain had, during those days of trouble, many more armed ships by count than we had. Her naval list showed thirty-six screw liners rated from 70 to 131 guns, nineteen screw frigates, rated from twenty-five to fifty-one guns; forty-six sloops and corvettes, rated from four to twenty-two guns, and seventy-six paddle-wheel ships rated from one to twenty-eight guns. The whole naval list, however, was armed chiefly with the 32-pounder. The best gun in the British navy fired a solid shot weighing only sixty-eight pounds. For work in the battle line those ships were only a little better than those used by Nelson fifty years earlier.

As the *Merrimac* lay off Southampton she was seen to be the most efficient fighting ship in the world. Because this fact was seen—because it was seen that we were prepared to make a good fight—*we had peace.* By preparing to repel the French aggressions at the end of the eighteenth century we escaped a war with France. By refusing to repel with force the British aggressions at the beginning of the nineteenth century we were at last driven into the War of 1812 with its indescribable sufferings and losses. By preparing, in the middle of the nineteenth century, to repel aggressions, we escaped a war.

CHAPTER XVII

IN THE BEGINNING OF THE CIVIL WAR

While adequate preparation had saved the nation from two foreign wars and a lack of it had made the War of 1812 inevitable, there was nothing in these experiences that could aid our statesmen when internal troubles precipitated the Civil War. It has been asserted that this war was definitely foreseen and provided for by certain Southern leaders, and in proof of this assertion is quoted the fact that Secretary of War Floyd, a Southern man, ordered 117,000 muskets sent from Northern arsenals to those in the South a short time before the States began to secede. The ships of the navy, it is also said, were deliberately scattered all over the world by Secretary of the Navy Isaac Toucey in order to weaken the power of the general government.

A little examination of the facts, however, shows that the ships were not as badly scattered in 1860 as they had been in previous years. The home squadron consisted of twelve ships, which was a greater number than usual; in 1851 there were but five in the home squadron. Further than that, Secretary of the Navy Toucey (he was a Connecticut man) had for two years urged upon Congress the building of a squadron of seven sloops-of-war of a draught of fourteen feet, and Congress, by the act of February 21, 1861, voted to build them. They were admirably adapted for service in the Southern waters, as was pointed out by various members of Congress, but several of the men of the South voted for the bill. Manifestly these men,

at least, were not in the secret, if there was a "conspiracy."

The transfer of the muskets has a more warlike look, but the order was issued on December 30, 1859, a long time before any one could tell how the elections were to go.

As the States declared themselves independent they took possession of the national forts, guns, revenue cutters, coast survey vessels and other means of making war that happened to be within their limits. The navy yard at Pensacola was seized on January 12, 1861, by Florida forces. The navy yard at Norfolk, with 2,000 cannon, an excellent dry dock and shops fitted for ship building as well as repairing, was captured by Virginians on April 20. Ten small coast survey vessels and revenue cutters were seized at various points.

Having seceded as individuals the States met by delegates at Montgomery, Alabama, on February 4, 1861, and united on March 11 under a "Constitution for the Provisional Government of the Confederate States of America." In the meantime, as the various States seceded, many of the naval officers who had been appointed from those States resigned their commissions and went home. As a rule they were then taken into the service of their States. It appears that out of 1,563 officers of various grades in the navy there were 671 from Southern States. Of these 322 followed their States and the others remained faithful to the old flag.

When Mr. Jefferson Davis was inaugurated President of the new Confederacy a number of the naval officers who had resigned reported to him for service, among others Commander Raphael Semmes. On February 21 Davis sent Semmes to the North "to gather together with as much haste as possible such persons and material of war as might be of most pressing necessity." ("Memoirs of Service Afloat.") Guns, ammunition and machines for

making both, were purchased, and some men to work the machines were employed. It was an important mission, but the letter of instructions to this naval commander did not say a word about the purchase of ships for war purposes.

The Confederate Navy Department was established on February 21, and S. R. Mallory, formerly a Senator from Florida, was made Secretary, but it was not until March 15 that the Confederate Congress authorized their President "to buy or build ten steam *gunboats for coast defences*." They were faithful to the true Jeffersonian ideas of warfare. They determined to prepare for "coast defences" and thus invited the Union forces to carry on the war in Southern waters.

Even the providing of gunboats was not pushed; on the contrary, officers from the old navy were sent into the Confederate army. A company of Confederate marines was ordered from Pensacola to the army in Virginia, and General Bragg, commanding the Confederate forces at Pensacola, who had managed to fit out a couple of armed vessels, appealed repeatedly but in vain for officers to take charge of them.

There is, of course, only one substantial reason for laying stress upon these minor facts, and that is to portray the attitude of the Confederate leaders towards a naval force.

At the North Mr. Gideon Welles became the Secretary of the Navy in the cabinet of President Lincoln, and Mr. Gustavus V. Fox, who had served fourteen years in the navy, was made Assistant-Secretary of the Navy. The technical knowledge of Mr. Fox was used to the greatest advantage by Mr. Welles, and that was a fortunate thing for the Union cause since the national navy was at first in no condition for an aggressive war. The law provided for 7,600 enlisted men in the navy, but on March 10, 1861,

only 210 of them were to be found in the ports of the Atlantic. The list of officers was heavy with old men, the commanders ranging up to sixty years of age.

Out of ninety vessels on the naval list fifty were ships of the sail, of which some were yet on the stocks. Two of the forty steamers were also on the stocks, two were tugs and one was on Lake Erie. Several of the others were nearly useless for want of repairs. In all there were twenty-four serviceable steamers, of which seven were in the home squadron. Of the seven, however, only three were in northern ports and at the immediate command of Secretary Welles.

It is obvious, however, that while the national navy was inadequate for any kind of a war, the Federal administration was much better off than the Confederate with its ten small revenue and coast survey vessels. And that is to note only a small part of the Union naval predominance, for the Confederates had no merchant fleet from which to improvise cruisers, nor had they any shops fitted to provide a warship with machinery or other necessary outfit. The North had many shops and many men skilled in the work of shipbuilding, besides a considerable number of merchantmen that could be utilized for some purposes of war. Moreover, the New England coast could furnish hosts of able seamen, while the South had scarcely a man of the kind.

The war began when the Confederates attacked Fort Sumter on April 12. The first aggressive naval work of the Federal Administration was laid out when on April 19 and 27 proclamations were issued blockading the Confederate ports.

The Confederate coast had, all told, 185 harbor and river openings. In fine weather, goods could be landed from shoal-draught ships at almost any point on the entire coast, and many cargoes were landed during the war

where no harbor existed. The continental line from Alexandria, Va., to Matamoras, Mexico, was 3,549 miles long. The shore line, including bays and sounds, was 6,789 miles long, and the entire beach line, including islands, was 11,953 miles long.

The principal Confederate ports on the Atlantic were Wilmington, Charleston and Savannah; on the gulf, Pensacola, Mobile, New Orleans and Galveston. But while these were the points to be most carefully guarded the whole line of beaches had to be watched.

This work was begun with three steamers and sixteen ships of the sail. In due time 600 armed ships were employed alongshore and there were many steam cruisers on the high seas intercepting the ships that were carrying supplies to Confederate ports.

Naturally, from closing a harbor by stationing ships at its entrance, the national navy was next employed in taking possession of such ports as could be secured. But before describing any of this aggressive work a review of that done by the blockaders and the blockade runners must be given.

As all know, cotton was the chief product of the South. The marketed crop of 1860 was estimated at 5,200,754 bales, of which 750,000 remained in the cotton States in the spring of 1861. The crop of 1861 was 2,750,000 bales, and that of 1862 was 1,000,000. The reduction was due to the exigencies of war—chiefly to the loss of market through the blockade. "The quantity actually sent abroad up to July or August, 1862, was reckoned not to exceed 50,000 bales," says Bernard's "Neutrality of Great Britain," an English authority issued in 1870. A million bales had been burned by the owners, meantime, to keep it out of the hands of the Federal forces. A cotton famine had been created in England. Actual starvation came upon the working people, and a half million of them were supported by charity. The Confederate leaders had hoped

that this famine would drive the British to intervention, but the fact is (and it is an important fact as showing the influence of naval power), the very efficiency of the blockade was a warning to foreigners to keep their hands off.

Because little cotton was going to market the price increased. It was twenty-six cents a pound in May, 1862, and in September it had increased to sixty in gold. In the Confederate States it could be bought for eight. Thus a bale (500 pounds at this time) costing $40 could be sold for $300, if it were transported through the blockade to market.

At the same time the stocks of certain goods had been exhausted in the South. Clothing, especially the finer sort, luxuries, such as wines, spices and salt, were scarce or unobtainable. The demand for military supplies was urgent. The prices the Confederates would pay for goods brought in afforded nearly as much profit on imported cargoes as could be obtained on cotton carried out.

Where such profits as these were offered, traders flocked in, regardless of the risks. The blockade runners were nearly all English. At first, goods were sent to the Bermudas, the Bahamas, or to Havana, in order that they might be safe that far on their journey. Nassau, a village of wreckers, suddenly grew into a commercial emporium that was ruled by men whose instincts accorded well with those of the natives. When the United States courts held that the ultimate destination of cargoes determined their character, the goods were nominally sold to merchants in the ports mentioned. Men on barren coral reefs began importing ship-loads of military supplies, if one could believe the papers on ships trading to the Atlantic reefs. Of course the papers were made as a blind; every blockade runner found perjury easy. Big merchantmen carried the cargoes to the reefs whence swift little runners took the goods to the Confederate ports. When the court declared

the unity of the voyage in spite of the ostensible sale of goods to Nassau merchants, the goods were shipped to New York and forwarded thence to Nassau. This balked the courts, but the customs officials soon refused to clear out vessels with such goods to such ports. Thereafter the goods were sent direct to Nassau in vessels that took chances of eluding the cruisers.

Meantime, it had been noted that the use of soft coal on the blockade runners often made a smoke that betrayed them to the cruisers. To avoid this smoke hard coal was purchased in the North until the export of it was prohibited.

After New Orleans and Pensacola came into the Federal possession the blockade breakers established houses in those ports and did a smuggling business thence to agents in the Confederacy.

Lest the reader think that the moral character of the blockade breaker has been too harshly described, the story which Thomas E. Taylor tells, in his "Running the Blockade," about his sale of the *Will-o'-the-Wisp* may be given. He says (p. 110):

> As I found her a constant source of delay and expenditure I decided to sell her. After having cobbled her up with plenty of putty and paint, I was fortunate enough to open negotiations with some Jews with a view to her purchase. . . . We arranged a trial trip, and after a very sumptuous lunch I proceeded to run her over a measured mile for the benefit of the would-be purchasers. I need scarcely mention that we subjected her machinery to the utmost strain, bottling up steam to a pressure of which our present Board of Trade, with its motherly care for our lives, would express strong disapproval. The log line was whisked merrily over the stern of the *Will-o'-the-Wisp* with the satisfactory result that she logged 17½ knots. The Jews were delighted, so was I; and the bargain was clinched. I fear, however, that their joy was short-lived.

It must be remembered, in connection with the blockade

runners, however, that some of them were Confederate citizens who engaged in the business for the good of their cause as well as for profit, and that the pilots were usually running risks for principle.

The captain of a blockade runner commonly received $5,000 for a round trip, the mate and the engineer $1,000 each, while the deck hand got $40. The *Banshee*, a noted runner, received $250 per ton freight in her first voyage. Taylor says he was allowed to carry a private venture which usually added some thousands to his gains.

Old, inexpensive vessels were used for running the blockade in the early days of the war, in order to reduce losses in case of capture, but as the conditions prevailing on the coast became known the business was systematized, and steamers of the lightest frames and most powerful engines were built for the trade. These were loaded to the last gasp and then set toward the Confederate port. Every sail and every trail of smoke seen on the horizon was avoided when possible and the runner was so handled that she arrived off her destined port at night. The lone light always displayed on the flagship of the blockading squadron was as good as a lighthouse to the enterprising skipper and the runner was driven through the line or around its end as seemed most convenient. Sometimes a dash was made through the blockading lines in broad daylight.

Apparently the first steamer built for the trade was the *Nicolai I*, that was captured by the blockading squadron off Little River Inlet, N. C., on March 21, 1863.

No exact account of the blockade runners and their voyages was ever kept or made, but reports from various authentic sources give a very good idea of the extent of the business that was carried on in this way, as well as of the character of the goods run in. Fraser, Trenholm & Co., of Liverpool, according to a letter written by a member of the firm, and printed in "Neutrality of Great Britain,"

had kept seven steamers plying regularly between Nassau and Confederate ports, chiefly Charleston, for more than a year previous to July 3, 1863. In all thirty-two round voyages had been made by these runners and they had carried out 21,000 bales of cotton. One of the fleet, the *Margaret and Jessie,* had made five voyages in five months, carrying out 3,714 bales of cotton and bringing in full loads of goods. This runner was captured on November 5, 1863, but it is said she had made fifteen voyages before she was taken. These seven steamers were really Confederate transports, for the Confederate Government used two-thirds of the space each way, but they were registered as private British ships.

Between April 1 and July 6, 1863, fifty runners cleared out from Havana, but there is no record to show how many made a good voyage.

Matamoras, Mexico, near the mouth of the Rio Grande, enjoyed a great trade on account of its location. It was a long and expensive route, but the trade was large.

The following from the *Richmond Despatch,* January 3, 1865, gives an idea of the extent of which goods were imported on the Atlantic coast, late in the war, and the character of the goods as well:

> The special report of the Secretary of the Treasury in relation to the matter shows that there have been imported into the Confederacy at the ports of Charleston and Wilmington, since October 26, 1864, 8,632,000 pounds of meat, 1,507,000 pounds of lead, 1,933,000 pounds of saltpetre, 546,000 pairs of shoes, 316,000 pairs of blankets, 520,000 pounds of coffee, 69,000 rifles, 97 packages of revolvers, 2,639 packages of medicine, 43 cannon, with a large quantity of other articles. The shipments of cotton on Government account since March 1, 1864, amount to $5,296,000 in specie. Of this, cotton to the value of $1,500,000 has been shipped since the first of July and up to December 1.

The fact that millions of pounds of meat were imported

was most significant. The Confederacy was starving to death, and yet the fight was continued.

By taking advantage of stormy nights the runners built for the purpose were able to make many voyages, and individual adventurers were enriched. Nevertheless, in view of the fact that it was only in such special boats and under exceptional circumstances that the guarding vessels could be passed, it is unnecessary to argue that the blockade was the most efficient that had ever been set before hostile ports. Every story told by the runners in the years after the war proves the efficiency of the work done.

Of the blockade as seen from the national ships it may be said that to lie, month after month, doing nothing but keep a bright lookout was trying to the soul. Food spoiled. The water was never fresh. The heat of the stoke-hole varied from 110° to 150°. Many vessels were built by contractors who were thieves at heart, and were constantly out of repair. The opportunities to incur disgrace through the escape of a runner were abundant; the opportunities to win renown were almost wholly lacking.

Withal, the blockade was dangerous work. The thievish contractors built vessels that were liable to drown all hands, or to scald all the stoke-hole force with steam from defective boilers. Because the runners were swift vessels and sly, the blockaders found it necessary to anchor close in on the bars of the various ports, and steam in among shoals that were constantly shifting. They rode out gales where no sane merchant captain would have dared to anchor in the days before the war, and they chased runners bound in until the guns of the Confederate forts were within half range. It is impossible to do justice to the men who served faithfully on the blockade.

The runners captured and sent in numbered 1,149, in addition to which 355 were destroyed in various ways, thus 1,504 runners were put out of commission. Of those

captured fifty sold for more than $100,000 after condemnation, sixteen brought more than $300,000 and two more than $500,000. The total sum brought by the sale of captured runners was more than $31,000,000.

CHAPTER XVIII

AT CAPE HATTERAS AND PORT ROYAL

The expedition to capture the forts the Confederates had erected at Hatteras Inlet was the first important work in which the navy was engaged. It was organized by Flag-Officer S. H. Stringham, the senior officer of the North Atlantic blockading squadron.

The use of the appellation "flag-officer" was a curious indication of the attitude of Congress toward the navy in those days. Our legislators thought it would never do to give the chief officer of a squadron the actual rank of commodore or of admiral; that would be following too closely the aristocratic tendencies of monarchical Europe. So it was enacted (Act of December 21, 1861) that the senior captain should be called "flag-officer."

Flag-Officer Stringham's fleet consisted of the steamers *Minnesota,* Captain G. J. Van Brunt; *Wabash,* Captain Samuel Mercer; *Monticello,* Commander J. P. Gillis, and *Pawnee,* Commander S. C. Rowan, with the revenue cutter *Harriet Lane,* Captain John Faunce, R.M., and a number of transports carrying 860 soldiers under Major-General B. F. Butler. For landing these soldiers through the surf the life-saving stations previously established on Long Island and New Jersey coasts were stripped of their life-boats.

The expedition reached the inlet on August 27, 1861, and during the next two days the Confederates were shelled out of the forts, which were under the command of Flag-Officer Samuel Barron (the Confederates had adopted

this title also), of the Confederate navy. The total number of men carried as prisoners to New York was 678. The Confederates reported "two killed and twenty-five or thirty wounded," part of the latter escaping to a flotilla of small boats that were lying in the sound. There were no losses on the ships; the garrisons were composed of untrained men.

The capture of these forts was the first victory obtained by the Union forces in the course of the war, and it was a matter of no small importance for the reason that the Union army had been disastrously defeated at Bull Run, Va., on July 21. Another view of the importance of this victory is found in the fact that, within two months preceding it, the Confederates had sent sixteen prizes, taken by their cruisers and privateers, through the inlet to a safe port. Of course the inlet was now definitely closed for such uses. Further than that it was a permanent advance in the recovery of seceded territory.

To follow up the success attained at the inlet a shoal-draught fleet was sent into the North Carolina sounds.

Flag-Officer L. M. Goldsborough took command of the naval end of the expedition at Hatteras Inlet on January 13, 1862. General A. E. Burnside was in command of the 12,000 soldiers that accompanied the expedition. On February 7 the Union forces arrived in the sound between Roanoke Island and the mainland, and found the Confederates awaiting them. Three forts had been built on the island from Pork Point to Weir's. The guns numbered eight, four and twelve respectively. To prevent the Union fleet passing to the north of the island a pile barrier had been made from Red Stone Point, almost to Pork Point, and this was strengthened by sunken hulks. The engineering works of defence were well made; the guns had only twenty-eight rounds of powder each, while the soldiers on the island were inadequate in number.

The Confederate flotilla consisted of eight steamers, of which two were of the usual light inland side-wheel class and the others were tugs built for use in the canal. There was also a schooner. Flag-Officer W. F. Lynch commanded the flotilla. The vessels carried two or three guns each, most of them small. Goldsborough had nineteen vessels, all small, but well armed. The Confederate supply of ammunition afloat was almost as scanty as was that on shore. The sailors on the Confederate fleet were nearly all foreigners, recruited from the prizes mentioned above. Captain W. H. Parker, who commanded the *Beaufort*, says he had but one American on her.

On February 7 Burnside began landing his soldiers at Ashby's Harbor on Roanoke Island, and at 11:30 o'clock, or thereabouts, the Union fleet opened on the Confederate fleet and forts. The firing was continuous and rapid on the Union side, interrupted and slow on the Confederate, and on both sides wretched in aim. After three hours' work one Union gunner got the range—presumably, though it may have been an accident—and sank the *Curlew*, the largest of the Confederate steamers, with a single shot. At the same moment the Union steamer *Hetzel* was "struck below water" and had to "haul off and repair." The wooden buildings in the fort on Pork Point were set on fire at about the same time.

Toward night the Confederate vessels made a brave dash to shorten the range, but they were driven back, and then, when they were covered by the darkness, they steamed away to Elizabeth City, hoping to replenish their ammunition.

Next day (February 8) Burnside made a successful attack on the Confederate soldiers on the island and the forts were evacuated. Leaving Burnside in possession of Roanoke, Goldsborough pushed on to Elizabeth City with his fleet, and on the 10th captured one of the Confed-

erate vessels and destroyed or caused to be destroyed four of the others. Three escaped to Norfolk. As a result of the expedition the Union forces gained complete control of the sounds, and were able to threaten Norfolk from the rear.

The Port Royal expedition followed that to Cape Hatteras. It was seen early in the fall of 1861 that the vessels on blockade duty off the Altantic coast, south of Hatteras, were in need of a quiet rendezvous where they could make repairs and take on coal. The success at Hatteras determined the Union Navy Department to secure Port Royal Sound, South Carolina. Flag-Officer S. F. Du Pont was ordered to lead the naval expedition and General T. W. Sherman was placed in command of 12,000 soldiers to hold the territory to be seized. The expedition sailed from Hampton Roads on October 29, 1861, and the anchorage off Port Royal Sound was reached on November 4. The channel was buoyed the same day, and during the next the fleet anchored within the shoals. Four gunboats were then sent in to draw the fire of the forts in order to see how they were armed.

Perhaps it ought to be pointed out here that the use of these steam gunboats for aggressive war within the shoal waters of the Confederate coast was a very different matter from building big rowboats to compel the British to do the country justice in the days before the War of 1812. For while the Union gunboats were small (usually about 500 tons), and were armed with one 11-inch gun and a smaller one, much on the Jeffersonian plan, they were not only fit for *aggressive* war but they were the largest vessels that could be sent into the waters for which they were designed.

By sending in the four gunboats it was learned that the Confederates had a large earthwork (Fort Walker) on Hilton Head, on the south side of the channel, in which

were mounted twenty-three guns. A smaller fort stood near with one gun in it. Fort Walker faced the channel and was, naturally, built to resist assault from the side of the sea. On the north side of the channel, two and five-eighth miles away, was Fort Beauregard, with twenty guns, while a smaller fort of five guns stood near it. Nearly all the guns in the forts were 32-pounders, but there were three or four of larger and more effective calibre, and there were two British siege guns that were marked with the Queen's broad arrow. Brigadier-General Thomas F. Drayton, commanding, reported that he had 255 men in Fort Walker and a total of 622 on Hilton Head Island. On the other side of the sound he had 640 all told, with 149 in Fort Beauregard.

As a further defence of the sound the Confederates had a flotilla of five steamers under Flag-Officer Josiah Tattnall. As a midshipman Tattnall had led in the American dash at the British flotilla that tried to take Craney Island by storm, during the War of 1812. In the war with Mexico he went under the wall of the castle at Vera Cruz and remained under the fire until he was dragged out, so to speak, by an officer sent after him. It was he that went to the rescue of a British ship in Chinese waters during the opium war, using the celebrated expression "Blood is thicker than water." He was one of the ablest fighters of the old navy. But now he was in command of merchant steamers built for inland water navigation and carrying their powder as well as their boilers unprotected above the water line.

There is nothing in the documents to show that Du Pont gave much heed to the Confederate flotilla. For the attack on Fort Walker he selected the frigates *Wabash* (flag), Commander C. P. R. Rodgers, and *Susquehanna*, Captain J. L. Lardner; the sloops *Mohican*, Commander S. W. Godon; *Seminole*, Commander J. R. Gillis, and

Pawnee, Lieutenant-Commander R. H. Wyman; the gunboats *Unadilla*, Lieutenant-Commander N. Collins; *Ottawa*, Lieutenant-Commander T. H. Stevens, and *Pembina*, Lieutenant-Commander J. P. Bankhead, with the sailing sloop *Vandalia*, Commander F. S. Hagerty, in tow of a tug. This was the main battle line. A second line that was ordered to form on the northerly or Fort Beauregard side of the main line was composed of the gunboats *Bienville*, Commander Charles Steedman; *Seneca*, Lieutenant-Commander Daniel Ammen; *Curlew*, Lieutenant-Commander P. G. Watmough; *Penguin*, Lieutenant-Commander T. A. Budd, and *Augusta*, Commander E. S. Parrott. These were to give especial, if long-ranged, attention to Fort Beauregard.

With a flood tide on the morning of November 7, 1861, Du Pont formed his lines and headed into the sound. Fort Walker opened fire at 9:26 o'clock. Beauregard followed instantly and Tattnall's flotilla joined in. But with the *Wabash* leading, the Union ships steamed ahead and returned the fire steadily until they were so far up the sound that their guns would no longer bear on either fort. Then the ships turned around. They had passed up at a range of 800 yards from Fort Walker, they returned within 600 yards and they now found their fire unobstructed by traverses in the fort. The Confederates had not prepared to resist an attack from the upper or northern side.

After steaming once over the route he had laid out in front of Fort Walker a second time, Du Pont started up for a third round; but while his ships were yet before the fort, at 1:15 o'clock, the Confederates abandoned their guns. The untrained garrison had supposed their guns would sink any ship that tried to pass them, but so far as they could see (and as a matter of fact, too) they had been able to do no material damage to any one of the fleet.

The ships, however, were dismounting the guns of the fort and killing some of the garrison at every round, therefore the garrison would not face a third enfilading fire. Commander C. R. P. Rodgers hoisted the Stars and Stripes over Fort Walker at 2:20 o'clock. Fort Beauregard was abandoned at about the same time and the Union forces took possession next morning.

The fleet lost only eight killed and twenty-three wounded. Fort Walker lost ten killed and twenty wounded, and the entire loss in and around both Fort Walker and Fort Beauregard was but fifty-nine.

One incident of the battle received much attention among naval men in later days. After the attack was begun the steamer *Pocahontas* came in from a station on blockade and joined in the attack. She was commanded by Commander Percival Drayton, a brother of the commander of the Confederate forces, and she did effective work in enfilading Fort Walker.

Having secured control of Port Royal Sound the Union gunboats ranged through the waters of the coast from Stone Inlet to Fernandina, Florida. St. Augustine was also occupied. Many harbors were thus closed against blockade runners at the same time that a convenient place of resort was provided for the permanent use of the Union ships along the Southern coast.

CHAPTER XIX

THE MONITOR AND THE MERRIMAC

The usual attitude of the Confederate authorities towards a navy during the days when their Government was first organized having already been described, it shall now be told how for a brief time the idea of using a naval force was exceedingly popular not only in the Confederate seat of government but throughout the whole Confederacy. This change of feeling was, perhaps, almost entirely due to the efficiency of the blockade as established by the Union forces at the mouth of the James and Elizabeth rivers that had furnished a waterway from Richmond and Norfolk to Hampton Roads. To raise the blockade at this point and thus secure an open way from the Confederate capital to the sea, Commander John M. Brooke, one of the most efficient officers that had left the old navy, suggested to the Secretary of the Confederate navy that a steam ironclad battery be constructed.

The idea of using such a battery was not new. Congress, by the act approved April 14, 1842, had contracted with Robert L. Stevens, of Hoboken, N. J., to build "a war steamer, shot and shell proof." This contract was never completed, but Stevens proved definitely that the task could be done. In the Crimean War ironclad batteries were used with good results, and within two years before our Civil War, France had built the ironclad ship *Gloire* while England had put afloat a more powerful ship called the *Warrior*.

Secretary Mallory adopted Brooke's suggestion, and in

spite of the lack of mills and forges in the Confederacy, he directed (June 10, 1861) Brooke to prepare the plans. Chief Engineer W. P. Williamson and Naval Constructor John L. Porter were ordered to assist Brooke. While the three were thus engaged Secretary Mallory ordered them to consider also plans for rebuilding the steam frigate *Merrimac* that had been burned when the Union forces abandoned Norfolk. Thereupon the three decided to use what remained of the *Merrimac* in the construction of the proposed ironclad battery. The fact that her machinery, although it had been condemned, was yet in place in the sunken, half-burned hull, and could be repaired was the chief inducement for utilizing the old *Merrimac*.

On placing the hulk in the drydock the old berth deck became the gun deck. Beginning about fifty feet from each end of this deck a casement, shaped much like the roof of a country house, was erected over it. The walls were slanted at an angle of thirty-six degrees, they were built two feet thick of solid timbers and they were covered over with two layers of two-inch iron plates, well bolted on. The ends of the casemate were rounded and the guns at the ends were mounted so that they could also be fired in broadside. When the work was done enough ballast was taken on to submerge the uncovered ends of the deck and the eaves of the casemate. The bow of the ship was armed with a V-shaped casting to serve as a ram. The pivot guns at the ends of the casemate were 7-inch rifles designed by Commander Brooke—in shape something like the Dahlgrens, but well strengthened at the breech with wrought-iron bands. In the broadside were two 6.4-inch rifles and six 9-inch Dahlgrens. The rebuilt ship was renamed *Virginia*.

The work on this ironclad was pushed with growing vigor, and when Commander Brooke had tested a target

covered with the plates and found it proof against the shot of the best Dahlgren guns the enthusiasm of the people of the South was roused to a degree never reached either before or later in the war. Of course the people came to believe that their ship was far more formidable than the facts warranted, but that only increases the historical importance of their enthusiasm. For while the ironclad idea was popular a number of other ships of the kind were planned, and they were ships that lacked but little of showing an efficiency fatal to the hopes of those who wished to preserve the Union. Moreover, this enthusiasm is interesting because of the reaction that followed.

Ironclads were first considered at the Navy Department at Washington in May, 1861. The gray-haired officers necessarily (it would seem) opposed any such innovation, just as similar officers at the present writing (1907) oppose the use of steam turbines, and the matter was left over for the consideration of Congress, which did not meet until July 5. Congress was full of the idea that the Navy Department had already spent more money for ships than the war would ever demand, but on August 3 an appropriation was made. Two months after the Confederates had begun work a board of Union naval officers was appointed to consider a number of plans that had already been submitted to the Navy Department by inventors, *not one of whom was a naval officer. The officers of the old navy did not invent*—they were not encouraged to do so.

Of these plans three were accepted, but the one that was submitted by John Ericsson, of New York City (he who had introduced the use of the screw for driving warships), is alone worth notice here. This ship was the famous *Monitor*.

No sailor could have invented the *Monitor*. Her hull was composed of two parts. Underneath all was a scow in shape something like a lengthwise cut from a long water-

melon. It was 124 feet long, 34 wide and 6 deep. On top of this he laid a great box, wedge-shaped at each end, and 172 feet long, 41 wide and 5 deep. A single row of rivets united the two. This superstructure projected 3 feet 8 inches beyond the sides of the lower hull and 24 feet beyond each end. The combination was like a raft on a canoe. A revolving turret 9 feet high and 20 feet in diameter, inside measurements, was placed on the centre of the deck, and it revolved on a spindle turned by steam-engines. Two 11-inch Dahlgrens were mounted, side by side, in the turret and fired through ports cut in the wall, which was composed of eight 1-inch iron plates. The commission expressed the opinion that she did not have the properties which "a sea-going vessel should possess," and that opinion has been fully sustained, but she was devised on a plan that would "render the battery shot and shell proof," and a contract was made for a trial vessel. It should be said that the revolving armored turret had been invented by Theodore R. Timby in 1841, but it was Ericsson who first made a practical application of the device.

The hull of this strange ship floated only a few inches above smooth water, and in rough seas the waves flooded across it unimpeded save by the turret and other elevated structures. These structures included a pilot house (built log-house fashion of iron bars 9x12 inches in size) and the smokestack, which rose only a few feet above the deck. Blowers were provided to make a draught, and in time of battle the smokestack was taken down altogether. The propeller wheel was under the overhang at the stern and the anchor was concealed in like manner at the bow. The side of the hull was protected with five one-inch plates and the deck with two half-inch plates.

The contract for the *Monitor* was made on October 4, 1861, and her keel was laid at Greenpoint, Brooklyn, on October 25—more than four months after the Con-

federates began work on the *Merrimac*. This needless delay cannot be emphasized too much, because in a service where promotions are always made by seniority conservatism becomes a deadly blight.

But after the keel was laid three shifts of men were employed—work was driven day and night. She was launched January 30, 1862, delivered at the navy yard February 19, and put in commission, with Lieutenant John L. Worden as captain, on the 25th. Lieutenant S. Dana Greene was her executive officer and Isaac Newton was the chief engineer. Her entire crew, fifty-eight men, was made up of volunteers.

At 11 o'clock on March 6, 1862, the *Monitor* headed away for the Chesapeake in tow of a tug. On the way a northwest gale nearly drowned her and all hands, for when the seas rolled across the deck the water poured down her smokestack and every other opening. The fires were drowned. The blower belts got wet and would not work. Lack of draught filled the stokehole with deadly gases and nearly all the men there were made unconscious. When the rough water was avoided by heading inshore a tide rip was crossed and then the tiller ropes broke. But in spite of multiplied dangers and difficulties Cape Henry was reached at 4 P. M. on the 8th. And as she steamed in the crew heard the roar of cannon that were fired far up the bay and as night came on they saw flames of a ship that was burning fiercely just off Newport News.

In spite of the lack of mechanics, and of the scarcity of iron, and of delays in transportation, the Confederate officers employed in converting the wooden-hulled *Merrimac* into an ironclad steam battleship had just completed their work. Flag-Officer Franklin Buchanan was in command of the *Merrimac* with Lieutenant Thomas Catesby R. Jones as executive officer, and when the *Monitor* arrived they had been giving their new ship the most

remarkable trial trip known to the history of armored vessels.

At 11 o'clock A. M. on March 8 the *Merrimac* cast off the lines that held her to the dock at the Norfolk navy-yard and headed north for Hampton Roads. With her were two armed steam canal boats, survivors of the battle at Roanoke Island—the *Beaufort* and the *Raleigh*. In the wake of this war squadron followed nearly every boat afloat in the Norfolk waters, and all loaded to the brim with people who were going to points from which "they could see the great naval combat which they knew was at last to take place. Some went by land. All work was suspended in public and private yards, and those who were forced to remain behind were offering up prayers for our success. A great stillness came over the land . . . As we steamed down the harbor we were saluted by the waving of caps and handkerchiefs, but no voice broke the silence. All hearts were too full for utterance; an attempt at cheers would have ended in tears." (Parker, "Recollections of a Naval Officer.")

From the Elizabeth River the *Merrimac* turned west toward Hampton Roads. The Union steam frigates *Roanoke* and *Minnesota* and the *St. Lawrence*, a ship of the sail, were anchored in the order named at wide intervals from Fortress Monroe westerly toward Newport News. The sailing frigate *Congress* was anchored just to the east of Newport News Point, while the sailing sloop *Cumberland* was anchored just to the west of the Point. These two ships were supposed to be blockading James River and about ten miles away up that stream were three Confederate armed steamers waiting to see the *Merrimac* come to Hampton Roads on her trial trip.

No sign of preparation for battle was to be seen on any of the Union ships. They had heard from runaway slaves that the *Merrimac* was ready, but they did not be-

lieve she would amount to much, even if she did come. The captain of the *Cumberland* had gone away to attend a court-martial, leaving Lieutenant George U. Morris in charge. The captain of the *Congress* had been relieved and Lieutenant Joseph B. Smith was in command for the time being.

Just before 1 o'clock, when the smoke of the squadron coming from Norfolk was seen, however, there were hasty calls on every ship to clear for action.

Having an experiment under him, Captain Buchanan determined to see what he could do with the sailing warship in the mouth of the James—the *Cumberland.* This ship was lying with her head towards the land and her starboard broadside towards the Confederate ironclad, when, at about 1:30 o'clock, the *Merrimac* opened fire upon her. The fire was returned by both the *Congress* and the *Cumberland.* The guns of the *Cumberland* were especially well handled and whole broadsides struck the ironclad walls of the *Merrimac;* but all in vain. The grease that had been thickly smeared over the iron plates, to make the shot slide off easily, sizzled and smoked under the impact of the shot, but solid balls as well as shells either bounded clear or fell shattered into the water alongside. Wholly unimpeded, the *Merrimac* came on steadily until she drove her armored bow into the side of the *Cumberland* with a crashing of planks and timbers heard distinctly above the roar of the guns. The wound—it was made near the starboard forerigging—was mortal. The *Cumberland* at once began to go down by the bow as the water flowed in, but her "guns' crews kicked off their shoes and stripped to the waist. Tanks of cartridges were hoisted on the gun deck and opened. On the berth deck the wounded men were lifted upon racks and mess chests to keep them from drowning; and as the water rose those who fell on the upper deck were carried amidships and left there. The boats

were lowered and made fast in a line on the shore side," ready for abandoning the ship, but when the *Merrimac*, after passing on up the James to turn around, had returned alongside the sinking *Cumberland* and demanded that she surrender, Lieutenant Morris replied:

"Never! I'll sink alongside."

The men worked their guns till the water came brimming through the hatches, and even then, as the ship heeled for the final plunge, one crew, with the water wetting their feet, awaited to fire a final shot before they plunged overboard to swim for life. This gun was commanded by William P. Randall, a New Bedford whaler. He was promoted for his gallantry and became a commander. "Never did a crew fight a ship with more courage and hardihood than those brave fellows of the *Cumberland* while the vessel was going down." (Soley, "The Blockade and the Cruisers.")

In the meantime the Confederate vessels that had been seen up the James came down and joined the ironclad and the canal boats in their attack upon the *Congress* and the shore batteries. At the same time the three Union frigates, *Roanoke*, *Minnesota* and *St. Lawrence*, were coming either under steam or in tow, but all three ran aground, "prudently," according to Admiral Porter, though it is said that the *Minnesota* was put on the mud by a pilot who was in the Confederate pay while pretending to be loyal. The *Roanoke* and *St. Lawrence* got clear, after a time, and both made haste back to the shelter of Fortress Monroe. The *Minnesota* was thus left open to an attack from the Confederate squadron.

As the *Cumberland* went down, Lieutenant Smith, of the *Congress*, saw that he had no hope of escaping, and he therefore slipped his anchor, made sail and drove his ship ashore to prevent the Confederates carrying her off. Thereupon the Confederates concentrated their fire upon

her. No effective reply could be made even to the smaller Confederate vessels (no guns would bear on them), but the Stars and Stripes were kept flying for an hour; the flag would not have been hauled down even then but for the fact that Lieutenant Smith had been killed.

As the *Congress* could not be dragged out of the mud the Confederates fired red-hot shot into her and set her on fire. It was the burning *Congress* that the crew of the *Monitor* saw as they steamed up from the sea that night.

From the *Congress* the Confederate squadron turned to the *Minnesota.* The *Merrimac* drew so much water that she had to lie off at a distance of a mile in making this attack, and at that range her shot did but little damage. The smaller confederate vessels, however, took positions where the *Minnesota's* guns would not bear, and thus they were able to rake her with little hurt to themselves. In fact she would have been destroyed by them alone but for the fact that night came on and the falling tide compelled the ironclad to return to the mouth of the Elizabeth river, where she could anchor in deep water.

In the fight the *Merrimac* had lost two killed and nineteen wounded, Captain Buchanan being among the latter. He was shot through the thigh by a musket ball. The others were hit by the fragments of a shell that burst in one of the open ports. The wound of the captain was so severe that Lieutenant Jones took command of the ship. The *Cumberland* reported 121 killed, wounded and missing, the *Congress* 120, while the fleet surgeon reported six killed and thirty-six wounded on the *Minnesota* and the other vessels.

When at 7 o'clock the *Merrimac* left Hampton Roads she had not only destroyed two well-armed ships of the old style but she had demonstrated that every wooden ship in the world was worthless, practically, in a conflict with a well-built armored ship. The three great frigates at

Fortress Monroe were at her mercy. She had achieved a victory more remarkable in its effect on sea-fighting than any known to naval history. The cheers of her crew as they entered the Elizabeth River were taken up by the waiting throng of spectators and a prolonged shout of triumph roared away to the uttermost parts of the Confederacy. The Confederate Secretary of the Navy had planned for the *Merrimac* "a dashing cruise on the Potomac as far as Washington," and she waited only to finish her work at Hampton Roads before starting to obey these orders.

At the North the *Merrimac's* work had a still more memorable effect. A shameful panic seized upon the people and even upon some of the officials in highest authority at Washington. Stanton, while at a cabinet meeting, proposed recalling Burnside from the work in North Carolina, and abandoning Port Royal Sound. He said he expected to see the new ironclad appear within range at any minute and fire a shot into the White House. He and his Assistant Secretary got into communication with several ship merchants of New York City and begged them to invent something to destroy the monster—"regardless of cost." Sixteen canal boats were loaded with stone and towed to a shoal in the Potomac ready to sink and block the channel. But for the patient and resolute Lincoln that panic might have ended all hopes of the restoration of the Union. A more effective portrayal of the value of aggressive warfare than the work of the *Merrimac* that day has rarely been seen.

Yet even in Washington, disgraceful as were the facts that have been given, there was one scene which went far toward making amends for the wound to American character. When the news of the surrender of the *Congress* reached Washington (Sunday morning), Commodore Joseph Smith, father of the young commander of the lost

ship, was at church, as was also Secretary of the Navy Welles, to whom the telegram was delivered. As soon as the service ended the Secretary carried the news to the old Commodore.

"What?" said he, "the *Congress* surrendered? Then Joe is dead."

The Secretary began to say that while the despatches did not give a list of the injured there was no reason for such gloomy forebodings, but the Commodore shook his head.

"You don't know Joe as I do," he said. "*He would never surrender his ship.*"

While the Confederates were leaving Hampton Roads in triumph and officials at Washington were appealing to rich merchants of New York to save the nation, the little turreted *Monitor* reached the scene of action. Captain John Marston, of the *Roanoke*, senior officer present, had orders at this time to send the *Monitor* through to Washington. The idea of waging war by defensive tactics—the old Jeffersonian ideal—prevailed there at that moment. Marston, however, had enough of the spirit of the American navy in him to disobey the panic-order he had received. He held the *Monitor* to fight the *Merrimac* in the waters she had made her own.

Accordingly, at 7 o'clock the next morning (Sunday, March 9, 1862), when the *Merrimac* came once more to Hampton Roads, the *Monitor* steamed forth to meet her. With perfect courage, if not with perfect confidence in his untried ship, Worden laid her alongside the Confederate ship and the fight was begun at pistol range. The two guns of the turret were fired point-blank. The shot broke the plates, but did not penetrate the wall. The *Merrimac* returned the fire and her shots dented the *Monitor's* turret, but did not enter. No material advantage was gained by either ship then or later as they

steamed around each other and fired at will. The *Monitor*, being relatively handy, crossed the *Merrimac's* stern and missed breaking the rudder by a narrow space. The *Merrimac*, after a prolonged effort (for she was unwieldy), rammed the *Monitor*. But it was a glancing blow that did not hurt. Indeed, the ramming was a mistake, because the blow that had been given the *Cumberland* had knocked off the iron prow of the *Merrimac* and otherwise weakened the bow so that hitting the *Monitor* opened the *Merrimac's* timbers, making an "alarming leak."

The *Monitor's* crew also made mistakes. Loss of weights forward on the *Merrimac* had brought her bow up until the casemate eaves were awash. If the *Monitor* had fired into her water-line the shot would have gone through and sunk her. If the *Monitor's* gunners had used a full charge of powder (fifty pounds) instead of fifteen, to which their orders limited them, the shot would have pierced through the *Merrimac's* plates with destructive effect. Even as it was Lieutenant Jones reported that if two of the *Monitor's* shot had happened to strike in succession on the same spot, the iron plates would have been pierced and the wooden backing hurled in splinters across the deck.

During all the forenoon the two ironclads hammered at each other in vain. Then a shell from the *Merrimac* exploded against a peep-hole in the *Monitor's* pilot-house and Worden was entirely disabled—blinded—by the powder and iron splinters. In the confusion that followed the *Monitor* was withdrawn from the fight and taken into shoal water. Then Lieutenant Jones, who supposed that the *Monitor* had given up the fight, took the advice of his pilots, who said the *Merrimac* must leave for Norfolk at once if he hoped to reach the drydock and begin repairs that day.

Lieutenant John Taylor Wood, of the *Merrimac*, in describing this battle, said later:

"Although there is no doubt that the *Monitor* first retired—for Captain Van Brunt, commanding the *Minnesota*, so states in his official report—the battle was a drawn one, so far as the two vessels engaged were concerned. But in its general results the advantage was with the *Monitor*."

Lieutenant Greene, of the *Monitor*, wrote regarding the fight: "It has never been denied that the object of the *Merrimac* on the 9th of March was to complete the destruction of the Union fleet in Hampton Roads, and that in this she was completely foiled."

At Norfolk the *Merrimac* was overhauled and then, on two different occasions, she appeared under the command of Flag-Officer Tattnall in Hampton Roads. A great Union fleet had been gathered there. Among the ships were several big merchantmen that had been strengthened for use as rams. The *Monitor* was there also. To encourage this fleet to attack him Tattnall, on one occasion, sent two of his little consorts to Newport News where they cut three merchantmen from under the Union guns. The Union officers bashfully looked on. The Union fleet was under orders not to fight the *Merrimac* unless she made the attack. Of course, if a Farragut had been present he would have found excuse for a fight in the capture of the merchantmen, but Farraguts, alas, were few in number.

In the meantime the operations of the Union forces in the Peninsula and on the North Carolina sounds had made the Confederate occupation of Norfolk no longer feasible, and on May 10, 1862, the Union soldiers took possession of that city. The *Merrimac* was at anchor near Craney Island when the Confederates abandoned their works along the Elizabeth River. Tattnall wanted to take her up the James River, but his pilots said that it could not be done on account of the lack of water. Thereupon Tattnall ran her ashore at night on May 10, in the sight of

DECK VIEW OF THE *MONITOR* AND CREW.

COMMODORE WORDEN AND THE OFFICERS OF THE *MONITOR*.

Craney Island, not far from where he had, as a midshipman, driven the braggart British helter-skelter back to their ships during the War of 1812, and there he blew her to pieces.

On January 2, 1863, the *Monitor* foundered in a gale at sea while on her way to Beaufort.

The loss of the *Merrimac* was much greater than has ever been appreciated. For the Confederate people had built the highest hopes upon her success. They had been half wild with joy over the success of her first fight, and when Tattnall, the ablest fighting man of their navy, had failed to accomplish anything with her a revulsion of feeling came over the people. They lost all confidence in any kind of naval power, and the distrust then created—the prejudices then aroused—have not yet been wholly dissipated, although every one knows now that the work of the *Merrimac* was altogether creditable to the men who commanded her, and every one knows, too, that it was out of the fight she made with the *Monitor* that the modern turreted and casemated battleship was evolved.

CHAPTER XX

ON THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI

PLANS for operations on the Mississippi were considered in Washington as early as April 17, 1861, three days after the fall of Fort Sumter. At the invitation of the Navy Department, Captain James B. Eads, a noted river man of St. Louis, Mo., submitted, on April 29, proposals for building a fleet of ironclad gunboats of light draught and heavy guns for use on the Mississippi and its tributaries, and the plans were adopted.

On May 16 Captain John Rodgers, of the navy, was directed to supervise the naval work that was to be done in the Mississippi Valley. The Federal plan of action in this valley proposed first of all to regain control of the river by an advance with a naval force afloat and an army alongshore. It was seen that once the river was thus controlled the Confederacy would be severed, as the British tried to sever the United States when they sent powerful armies to Lake Champlain, in the War of 1812 and in the Revolution. Cutting off the western part of the Confederacy would deprive the Confederate armies of both men and food, especially food. Moreover, the plan for recovering the river was sure to arouse enthusiastic support not only throughout the Northwest but in Kentucky also; for the people there had been greatly alarmed at the prospect of having their grand highway under foreign control.

For the work thus proposed Rodgers purchased three river steamers which were armed and strengthened some-

what by the erection of timber bulwarks. On August 7 a contract was made with Captain Eads by which he agreed to build seven ironclad ships and deliver them ready for war by October 10, a period of sixty days. As built, these boats were 175 feet long by 50 wide and they had a draught of about six feet. The boilers were located in the hull, which floated with only a foot of freeboard. On the deck was erected a casemate something like the one of the old *Merrimac*. The front end of the casemate was covered with iron plates 2½ inches thick. The sides were not armored save in the space abreast the machinery. The pilot-house above the casemate had its front wall covered with 2½-inch iron, and the other walls with 1½-inch iron. A premium was thus placed on keeping them facing the enemy. The probability that a boat would ever wish to run past batteries located along the river seems not to have been contemplated. The boats were armed with 8-inch smoothbores, old 32-pounders and wretched rifles that had been made by cutting grooves in the bores of old 42-pounders—7-inch smoothbores.

An old snagboat, 202 feet long by 72 wide, was converted into an ironclad on much the same plan used in the new boats. She was called the *Benton*. She carried sixteen guns, of which two were 9-inch Dahlgrens. The new ships carried thirteen guns each.

The Confederate Congress, on hearing about the work planned north of the Ohio, provided "for the construction, equipment and armament of two ironclad gunboats for the defence of the Mississippi, and the city of Memphis, $160,000." (Act of August 24, 1861.) Mr. Davis, in a special message, had recommended $250,000. A contract for the building of the two ironclads was made immediately, and work was begun as soon as possible at Memphis. While the Union authorities provided for eight efficient ironclads to be used in aggressive war, the

Confederates made a meagre appropriation for two ironclads that were to be used for "defence."

The first aggressive movement of the Union naval force on these waters was made when General Grant took possession of Paducah and Smithland, towns at the junction of the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers with the Ohio. Two of the unarmored gunboats Rodgers had provided went with Grant, but they did not fire a gun. This was done on September 6, 1861. On that day Captain A. H. Foote relieved Rodgers of the command in those waters. Early in 1862 an expedition to reduce Fort Henry, an earthwork that had been constructed on the Tennessee to block the Federal advance, was undertaken. Foote, with four ironclads and the three wooden-clad gunboats, went on this mission. The army made such slow progress, on account of mud, that Foote got tired of waiting, and on February 6 he attacked the fort, beginning soon after noon. The fight was remarkable chiefly for the good work of the gunners on both sides. The Confederates had had little training, but they hit all the gunboats repeatedly, the flagship receiving thirty-one projectiles. On the other hand, the Union gunners dismounted seven of the twelve guns in the fort that could be brought to bear on the boats and at the end of an hour and a quarter they compelled the fort to surrender. It is to be noted here that throughout the war the marksmanship of the Western gunners was always better than that of those of the East. The action is also notable because here for the first time the men of the navy faced death in a new form. A shot pierced the boiler of the ironclad *Essex* and the steam scalded thirty-two men so severely that many of them died.

In the capture of Fort Donelson, on the Cumberland River, Foote's boats had a conspicuous part (February 13–16), and thereafter the Cumberland and the Tennes-

see rivers were ranged at will by the Union boats to points well within Confederate territory.

The next notable work done by the navy was at Island No. 10. The Confederates had erected powerful batteries there and on the adjacent mainland in a determined effort to stay the Federal advance.

Foote, with six ironclads, arrived within sight of the island on March 15. A dash past the forts was considered, but it was not attempted then because there would be no way to secure coal after the passage had been made until the island was taken. Then General John Pope, commanding the expedition, cut a passage through the swamps from a point above the island, across a narrow neck of land to New Madrid, well below it. This gave passage (April 4) for coal barges.

On March 30 Foote, foreseeing the completion of the canal, called a council of his captains to discuss, once more, a dash down the river. It was a memorable meeting. Every man present knew that the heavy Confederate guns could easily pierce the imperfect side walls of all the Union boats, and in this piercing there was a reasonable certainty that steam connections would be cut and boilers opened. To a man, the crews of all the boats were willing to face shot and shell and splinters, but to face the prospect of being boiled to death made the boldest hesitate. Of all the officers present only one, Commander Henry Walke, believed that any one of the boats could successfully pass the batteries. He eagerly offered to make the run alone and Foote felt obliged to let him try it.

To supplement the protection of the machinery Walke piled wood and planks alongside, and then flaked the iron chain cables over all. The deck was thickened with plank and finally a scow loaded with baled hay was lashed alongside. On the night of April 4, the day the canal through the swamps was opened, Walke reported ready, and at

10 o'clock at night he headed his boat, the *Carondelet*, down the stream.

As it happened, the moon had disappeared behind a heavy bank of clouds some time before, and as the black-hulled steamer approached the Confederate batteries a thunderstorm of tremendous power broke over the river. A prolonged flash of lightning revealed the ship to the Confederate sentinels on the island, and a minute later the garrison opened fire, aiming their guns as best they could by the lightning's glare while the pilot on the *Carondelet* steered by the flash of the guns on shore.

"The passage of the *Carondelet* was not only one of the most daring and dramatic events of the war; it was also the death blow to the Confederate defence of this position." (Mahan, "Navy in the Civil War.") On April 7 the Confederate force, numbering 7,000 men, surrendered, and at 10 o'clock that night the naval vessels took possession of Island No. 10. Walke never received the credit he earned in this dash. It was quite equal to that of Hobson at Santiago.

On April 12 Foote and his fleet came to rest just above Fort Pillow, on the first Chickasaw bluff, where the Confederate naval force was met for the first time. Five Confederate gunboats approached under the command of Captain George N. Hollins, a most efficient officer of the old navy. They were merely river steamers a little strengthened and poorly armed, and they were by no means fit to cope with Foote's ironclads. The ironclads for which the Confederates had contracted had not been finished. Lacking shops and mechanics and all kinds of materials that go with shops, the Confederate contractor had had a sorry time with his building; and yet it was for the building of a nation wherein the curse of slavery with this, and all its other attendant evils, were to be perpetuated that the Confederates were fighting!

The gunboats quickly gave up hope of fighting Foote's ironclads. Not so with another class of ships that the Confederates had provided. Most remarkable were these ships that would meet the ironclads, and withal they were characteristic of the American people of that day both at the North and the South; for a similar fleet was provided for the river by the Federal authorities, at about the same time, and some consideration must therefore be given them.

When it was learned in New Orleans that the Federals were building ironclad ships with which to sweep the river, a number of steamboat men proposed utilizing some of the swifter river steamers as rams for the destruction of the Union ironclads. This ram fleet was to be organized as a force entirely distinct from the naval vessels on the river. The river men asserted that while naval officers might do very good work upon the salt seas, naval red tape would make a sorry figure on the river. What was needed there, first of all, was valor, and if anybody in the world was brimful of valor it was the river man. He had been born to a fighting career and he had pursued that career with joy. Moreover, the river man knew the river and its ships. Two men, named Montgomery and Townsend, took the lead in urging the use of these rams and their arguments prevailed promptly at the Confederate capital. By the acts of January 9 and 16 the Confederate Congress appropriated $1,000,000 for fitting out this ram fleet. Major-General Mansfield Lovell, commanding at New Orleans, received general charge of the fleet, but he was instructed by the Confederate Secretary of War (letter of January 19) that "the general plan [is] to be worked out by the brave and energetic men who have undertaken it," and that "you will allow a very wide latitude" to them.

For this ram fleet, who had valor only to recommend them as warriors, the Confederate Congress gave freely

a million dollars; for the building of two ironclad naval ships for use in the same waters they grudgingly gave $160,000.

Fourteen steamers were seized at New Orleans and captains were appointed to them. Each captain fitted out as he thought best, but in general all the ships were filled in with timber at the bows and iron plates and straps were bolted on over all. Guns were also provided—two or three each—for use when occasion offered.

On April 15, 1862, eight of these rams were sent up the river, and they arrived at Fort Pillow while Foote was bombarding it with mortars afloat on rafts, just above Craighead's Point on the opposite side of the river.

On May 9 Foote was relieved by Captain C. H. Davis. Foote had been wounded at Fort Donelson and the wound refused to heal. It eventually killed him. The day after Davis took command he sent the ironclad *Cincinnati* to guard the mortar boats above Craighead's Point. On this day fire was opened at 5 o'clock. At 6:30 the Confederate ram fleet was seen coming up to attack the *Cincinnati*. She at once steamed out to open water to receive them and opened fire. Three of the rams steamed up above and then turned upon her. The *Bragg* rammed her, and she sank near the shore in eleven feet of water. The other Union boats were slow in coming to the rescue, but when they did arrive there was a rough and tumble fight, quite to the river man's taste, with the result that three of the rams were disabled. So were two of the Union ironclads. The rams retreated, when the fighting ended.

On June 4 Fort Pillow was evacuated by the Confederates because of the work of the Union army in driving Beauregard from Corinth (May 30), and it was seen that Memphis was no longer tenable. Nevertheless, when Davis and his ironclads arrived within sight of Memphis (June 5) the eight ram steamers were seen in waiting.

The disabled ships on both sides had all been repaired, and the Union fleet had been increased by the addition of two rams which had been fitted out much as those of the Confederates had been. One, called the *Queen of the West*, was commanded by Colonel Charles Ellet, Jr., and the other, the *Monarch*, was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel A. W. Ellet, a brother of Charles. Colonel Ellet had advocated an independent force of rams, as the New Orleans river men had done, and had had his ideas adopted at Washington. He now had his rams with the Union ironclads, but he was at entire liberty to decide when and how he would join in any fighting.

On the morning of the 6th the ironclads dropped down toward Memphis in line abreast. They found the Confederate rams in a double line in front of the city, and it is recorded that the river banks, which are high at this point, were covered with the people of the city who had come out to see the battle.

The Confederates opened the fight with a gun at long range; the ironclads replied with all their guns that would bear, and then, as the range grew shorter, Ellet's rams came steaming down through the open places between the ironclads. Cutting across their line of fire he headed the *Queen of the West* (which was in the lead) at a Confederate ram called the *Lovell*. He sunk her in deep water at the first stroke, but he was immediately struck by the Confederate rams *Beauregard* and *Price* and so badly hurt that he steamed to friendly shelter on the west side of the river. Then the *Beauregard* and the *Price* headed for the ironclad *Monarch*, but she dodged them and they collided in a way that sent the *Price* to the shore. A minute later the *Monarch* rammed the *Beauregard* and, at the same time, a shot from the *Benton* entered the *Beauregard's* boiler. Thus the *Beauregard* was put out of the fight and many of her people were scalded to death. Meantime the ram

Little Rebel had received a shot in her steam chest that disabled her, and then the four remaining Confederate rams fled for life. One only, the *Van Dorn*, escaped. Two of the four were captured and one was sunk by shot. Memphis surrendered the same day. In the meantime, however, one of the Confederate ironclads, the *Tennessee*, that had been building there, had been burned on the stocks, while the *Arkansas* was towed away to the Yazoo River with a barge load of railroad iron for plating.

The Union naval forces were making steady advances, but with pluck unsurpassed the Confederates stuck to the task of preparing defences. It is a story to make a man proud of the reunited country.

On June 29 Davis steamed down the river, bound for Vicksburg. He arrived on July 1, and found there a squadron of salt-water warships that had come up from the Gulf of Mexico, under the command of Flag-Officer David Glasgow Farragut.

CHAPTER XXI

FARRAGUT AT NEW ORLEANS

While the Federal Government had begun operations on the upper Mississippi in the spring of 1861, it was not until November of that year that serious thought was given to an attempt to capture New Orleans. Commander D. D. Porter, after a tour of duty on the blockading station at the mouths of the Mississippi, returned to New York to repair his steamer and, going to Washington, he laid a plan for taking the Southern metropolis. The plan was approved and Captain David G. Farragut was selected for the command, and on January 20, 1862, he was ordered to collect a fleet for the work. He sailed from Hampton Roads on February 2, bound for Ship Island anchorage, which lies not far to the north and east of the mouths of the Mississippi. There he gathered a fleet of seventeen steamers, of which the *Hartford*, a sloop-of-war carrying twenty-four guns (mostly 9-inch Dahlgrens), was the flagship. Four of the others were of similar force. The remainder were smaller, and armed with from four to ten guns. The guns, however, were in all cases of notable size, for even the gunboats carried one 11-inch Dahlgren each, and all but the *Varuna*, a 10-gun converted merchantman, had been built for war uses. The 50-gun frigate *Colorado*, Captain T. Bailey, and the sailing sloop *Portsmouth*, Commander S. Swartwout, were added to the squadron, but the *Colorado* could not be dragged across the bar and the *Portsmouth* was obviously unfitted to pass the forts.

As the plan of action contemplated the reduction of the two forts that had been built to guard the river,[1] a mortar fleet of twenty schooners was provided with five armed steamers to handle them. Commander Porter was in immediate charge of this flotilla.

To repel this powerful fleet—the most powerful the United States had ever assembled—the Confederates relied chiefly on the two river forts—Jackson, on the west bank, and St. Philip on the east—that stood in the swamps a few miles above the head of the passes, as the three mouths of the river were called. These forts were built of masonry and when the Confederates took possession of them, January 26, 1861, 109 guns were mounted in them, of which fifty-six were 24-pounders and the others were larger. General Mansfield Lovell, commanding at New Orleans, added two 7-inch Brooke rifles, three 10-inch smoothbores and a few mortars. The garrisons were composed chiefly of foreigners, because the natives of the region were too enthusiastic in the cause to remain cooped up in such a locality—they must needs go to the front. The junior officers, too, were young men without training, who had been appointed through social influence, and had been stationed where it was supposed they would do as little harm as possible. General J. K. Duncan and Colonel E. Higgins, commanding the forts, were, of course, men of ability. Higgins was one of the naval officers for whom the Confederates had been unable to find employment afloat.

To aid in repelling any fleet that might come, a raft made of heavy cypress logs was stretched across the river immediately in front of Fort Jackson, the guns of which would in no case be more than 500 yards from any ship

[1] Farragut's orders said: "You will collect such vessels as can be spared from the blockade, and proceed up the Mississippi and *reduce the defences which guard the approaches* to New Orleans, when you will appear off that city and take possession of it."

at this boom, while the guns of Fort St. Philip would bear at a range but little less effective. High water and driftwood carried away part of this boom in March, 1862, but when, early in April, Farragut brought his fleet to the passes, the breech had been closed by anchoring eight schooners in it, side by side, and connecting them together with heavy chains. As an additional defence, General Lovell provided more than forty fire rafts.

The floating or naval defences of the river were particularly interesting because they were either novel or wellnigh worthless. Most noted of all was an ironclad ram named the *Manassas*. A twin-screw tugboat was cut down and covered with a rounding deck of timbers that made her look something like a modern submarine. This deck was armored with iron and the bow was fitted to serve as a ram. Under Lieutenant A. F. Warley, of the old navy, it proved much more efficient than any one had reason to expect. A steamer that had been plying to Havana was armed and became the warship *McRae*. Two other sea-going steamers were converted to war uses by giving each a battery of two 32-pounders, and one of them, under Captain Beverley Kennon, who had been in the old navy, did remarkably good work. Then six of the ram fleet that was manned by river men only had been retained for the defence of the lower river, and much was expected of them.

At best all these vessels were mere makeshifts, something to be used as pitchforks have been used by other peoples who were compelled to fight without previous preparation. Of real warships, however, the Confederates had, or almost had, two. One, the *Louisiana*, was a converted floating drydock, 270 feet long. This dock was altered into a scow and a casemate armored with railroad iron was built on deck. Two paddle-wheels in wells, under cover, and two screw propellers were provided to drive her,

and she was armed with sixteen guns, of which two were 7-inch and seven were 6.4-inch Brookes. In design she was a most powerful battery; as built she was simply a botch for want of mechanics.

The *Mississippi* was the design of a Florida planter named Nelson Tift. Her hull was built with bottom and walls of solid timbers two feet thick, bolted together without frames or knees—simply a box 260 feet long, 58 wide and 15 deep. A casemate was built on deck in the usual style of the Confederates. The work on the *Mississippi* was done to a large extent by slaves from the neighboring plantations, and it was never completed. White men built the *Louisiana* and took advantage of the necessities of the occasion to go on strike.

Nevertheless, when Farragut came to the river, the *Louisiana* was nearing completion. Though her machinery was not able to drive her she was taken to Fort St. Philip and moored to the bank where she served as a battery when Farragut passed the forts.

There was urgent need for swift work in the Union fleet, when it reached the bar at the mouth of the river, but speed was out of the power of the energetic commander. To get the ships across the bar it was necessary to take out every movable weight and then drag them, one at a time, through the mud. The attempt to get the *Colorado* across, which was made under imperative orders, consumed much time and it was not until April 16 that Farragut saw his fleet safely anchored above the passes.

It is a curious fact that while many of the Union ships were dismantled and all the force was intent on making the crossing, the Confederates did nothing to molest them. Captain George Hollins, commanding the river forces of the Confederates, was sent to the upper river to meet Foote, and when at last he returned to New Orleans he was promptly ordered to Richmond to sit on a court-

martial to try Captain Tattnall for burning the *Merrimac*. In explanation of the lack of interest which the Confederate authorities showed in Farragut's work it is said that when it was learned in Richmond that Eads was to begin building ironclads for use in the upper Mississippi, some spies were sent to help build the new ships. These not only kept Richmond posted on the progress made but they impressed the Confederates with the idea that the only real attack was to come from the upper river. The Farragut movement was not taken seriously.

Farragut's first offensive move was made by posting the mortar boats. The first shell was fired at 10 o'clock on April 18. It exploded in the air above Fort Jackson. The second dropped into the river at a point which the ram *Manassas* had just vacated—it almost accomplished something, and in that respect it was like the mortar firing as a whole. More than forty shells were thrown every minute for six days and nights, all at Fort Jackson, but it remained "as strong to-day as when the first shell was fired at it." (Report of Lieutenant G. Weitzel, U. S. Engineers, May 5.)

Seeing, at the end of two days, that the mortar fire would prove ineffective, Farragut called a council of his officers on April 20 in order that they might give their opinions "*as to the best manner of passing the forts.*" He had determined to ignore his orders and force the fighting.

At the council the officers, instead of offering plans for passing the forts, pointed out the dangers and difficulties of so doing. The British frigate *Mersey*, Captain Preedy, and a French frigate had come into the river. The captains of these ships were under orders to do everything in a neutral way to obstruct Farragut's work. Both captains took a look at the raft and forts, and then, with an assumed air of candor, told every officer of Farragut's fleet who would listen to them that passing the forts was utterly

impossible. And many of the Farragut's officers would listen to them.

But Farragut was confident that he could pass the forts, as DuPont had passed those at Port Royal, and he saw that when he had passed the forts he could receive supplies through the bayous while the forts would be entirely shut off from every source of succor. The way to New Orleans would then be open, or easily opened.

Accordingly he dismissed his council and then expressed his own opinion in the form of a general order, in which he said:

"The flag-officer is of the opinion that . . . the forts should be run. . . . When in the opinion of the flag-officer the propitious time has arrived . . . he will make the signal for close action and abide the result—conquer or be conquered."

It was characteristic of Farragut that he would disobey orders, if need be in order to force the fighting, when that seemed necessary for the honor of the flag. It was also his habit to call councils only to ask for fighting plans; he never asked his officers whether it was advisable to fight or not. But with all his unswerving determination to force the issue he was cautious to the extent that he would make every possible preparation and leave nothing to chance. He was the ideal leader of a campaign. His ships were carefully prepared for action. Useless spars were landed. Mud was daubed over all the hulls to give them a neutral tint not easily distinguished at night. The machinery was protected as far as possible by bags of coal, ashes and sand, and even hammocks and bags of clothes were piled for this purpose. At the suggestion of Engineer J. M. Moore the iron cables were stretched along the hull to give additional protection, just as Walke had protected the *Carondelet* at Island No. 10 a few days earlier.

On the night of the 20th (after the council) the gunboats

Itaska, Lieutenant C. H. B. Caldwell, and *Pinola*, Lieutenant Pierce Crosby, were sent up to break the barrier raft. Caldwell had volunteered to try breaking it alone, but Farragut thought two ships would be needed and that Fleet-Captain Bell ought to go along to supervise the work. The *Itaska's* crew boarded one of the schooners in the barrier—the second from the last—and while Caldwell was looking her over, one of the crew saw that the chains holding the hulk to its next neighbor might be cast loose. This was done and the current carried the hulk and the *Itaska* aground on the bank of the river. The *Pinola* was called to the rescue and after breaking two hawsers she dragged the *Itaska* clear.

During all this time the Confederates had been firing steadily at both of the Union vessels, and as the *Itaska* was dragged out from the bank she became a much more conspicuous target than she had been at any time. But her head was pointed up stream and Caldwell could see that an opening wide enough to let his boat through had been made in the raft. On seeing that, he drove her through and well beyond the raft, turned her around, and giving her a full head of steam, he came back at the barrier with the current to aid him. Striking the chain between the third and fourth hulks the *Itaska* broke her way through and three of the hulks floated away with the current, leaving an opening sufficient for the whole fleet.

Being willing to give the mortars every opportunity, Farragut waited until the 23d before giving a definite order to advance. On that day he inspected every ship carefully, and then at 2 o'clock the next morning displayed two red lights in the rigging of the *Hartford* as the signal to form the battle line. The ships were placed in the following order:

First Division: Captain Theodorus Bailey, commanding; *Cayuga*, Lieutenant-Commander H. Harrison; *Pensacola*,

Captain H. W. Morrison; *Mississippi,* Captain M. Smith; *Oneida,* Commander S. P. Lee; *Varuna,* Commander C. S. Boggs; *Katahdin,* Lieutenant-Commander G. H. Preble; *Kineo,* Lieutenant-Commander G. M. Ransom; *Wissahickon,* Lieutenant-Commander A. N. Smith.

Centre Division: Flag-Officer Farragut; *Hartford,* Commander R. Wainwright; *Brooklyn,* Captain T. T. Craven; *Richmond,* Commander J. Alden.

Third Division: Captain H. H. Bell; *Scioto,* Lieutenant-Commander E. Donaldson; *Iroquois,* Commander J. DeCamp; *Kennebec,* Lieutenant-Commander J. H. Russell; *Pinola,* Lieutenant-Commander P. Crosby; *Itasca,* Lieutenant-Commander C. H. B. Caldwell; *Winona,* Lieutenant-Commander E. T. Nichols.

As the fleet steamed up the river so little noise was made on the ships that the crews heard the frogs croaking in the marshes. It was a ghostly fleet as seen through a slight fog from Porter's mortar boats. Unmolested, the *Cayuga* passed through the barrier, but as the second boat entered the opening a single gun was fired from Fort Jackson, and then every cannon that would bear in both forts began its blazing work. Their roar was instantly answered by the boom of Porter's mortars. The air overhead was quickly filled with the curving light of flying shells and the dark walls of the ships were lined with the sheeting flames of their guns. Then came the fire rafts, dozens of them, piled high with burning pine and tar, towed out from the banks above; some were cast loose to float free, and some were driven by tugs toward the line of battle. At the same time the Confederate armed steamers made their way out across the stream to add their fire to the multiplied flames which already covered the water. Rarely, if ever, had the world seen a more impressive fire picture than that upon the Mississippi when Farragut came to the barrier at Fort Jackson.

The first division of the line cleared the barrier without damage and hurried on to attack Fort St. Philip. But when Farragut passed the opening the air was thick with smoke that partly concealed the heroic crew of the little Confederate tug *Mosher* who were driving a fire raft straight at the flagship. Too late the *Hartford* tried to dodge the hot assailant. A broadside sank the tug and drowned its crew, but in the meantime the *Hartford* had been forced ashore and the raft had set the thick paint on her side and the tar on her rigging afire. The crew fled from the fierce heat of the flames, but Farragut's "Don't flinch from that fire, boys," returned them quickly to their stations, and before the flames could do serious damage the fire brigade, led by Master's Mate Allen, quenched them. Then the *Hartford* backed off the mud and steamed on.

While the second and third divisions were passing the barrier the big *Pensacola* and *Mississippi* overwhelmed the fire of Fort St. Philip. The ships were so near the fort that crews and garrison cursed each other with hearty ill-will. The big ships stood high enough out of water to shoot directly into the openings of the fort walls. The smaller ships, however, were too low to use their guns effectively, therefore they went steaming on to meet the Confederate fleet.

The ram *Manassas*, the *McRae* and the *Moore* were found in the lead. They attacked the *Cayuga* together, but Harrison, with his 11-inch pivot, stopped the *Moore* and then he dodged the other two. Captain Kennon, of the *Moore*, however, was by no means put out of the fight, even when at this time the *Oneida*, the *Pinola* and another ship began firing at him. The *Varuna* was passing in chase of the *Doubloon*. The *Varuna* carried ten guns and the *Moore* two, but Kennon went in chase of her, for he was a man who understood that "the All of Things is an infinitive conjugation of the verb *To Do*." When the

Varuna was well separated from the other Union ships the *Moore* overhauled her. The one gun on the bow of the *Moore* could not be brought to bear on the *Varuna* at this time because, being mounted on a high forecastle, it could not be sufficiently depressed without pointing at the *Moore's* own deck. At that Kennon fired at his own deck —he shot a port hole through his own bow—and then fired a shot at the *Varuna* that killed three men and wounded nine more. And when the *Varuna* turned to give him a broadside Kennon rammed her and drove her sinking to the river bank. More than half of the *Moore's* crew were now dead or wounded—cut down by shots the *Cayuga* and the other vessels had fired—but Kennon turned from the *Varuna* to face the whole Union fleet. He worked his guns as well as he could, but his ship was shot to pieces under him. Nevertheless, he drove her ashore, set her afire and burned her with her flag flying. It was a sad day for the nation when men like Kennon left the old navy.

The ram *Manassas* also made a good fight. After missing the *Cayuga* she rammed the *Brooklyn*, breaking through the planking, and failed to sink her only because of the imperfect machinery that cursed all Confederate warships, except the English-built cruisers. She then went in pursuit of the flagship, but the *Mississippi* turned on her, gave her a broadside that disabled her and she was then run ashore and abandoned. Finally, she drifted down the river and sank near the mortar flotilla.

The last of the Union fleet to pass the forts was the "gallant *Iroquois*," as Porter called her after seeing her "provokingly linger and slow her engines opposite the forts to give the rebels a taste of her formidable battery." As she cleared the barrier the Confederate *McRae* fired on her with guns loaded with copper bolts, in part—a fact that shows how the Confederates were supplied with am-

munition. The *Iroquois* ended the *McRae's* usefulness, by a single broadside. Commander Thomas B. Huger, who had been executive officer of the *Iroquois* a few months before, and was well liked by her crew, was captain of the *McRae* and was mortally wounded by the broadside that ended her career.

Since the battle line of the Union ships was in disorder after passing the ports, and since the air was full of smoke, the Confederate ram fleet, that was manned by river men only, had a far better opportunity to earn distinction than any one could have hoped for. The captains had only to steam in, choose their victims and use their armored bows. All of the captains had boasted of what they intended to do, and some had said they intended to show the old navy men how to fight. But the Union "ships came among them like dogs among a flock of sheep," as Mahan says, and like sheep they were destroyed. One, the *Stonewall Jackson*, while flying up the river, observed the *Varuna* lying half under water on the river bank and rammed her. That was the only stroke given by this fleet. She and all the others of her class were destroyed, either by their own crews or the guns of the Federal ships.

Farragut lost one ship, the converted merchantman, while thirty-five men had been killed and 147 wounded. But he had passed the forts, he had made away with nine of the Confederate ships, he had the other Confederate ships at his mercy and the way to New Orleans was open. Seeing that his victory was thus complete he allowed his men to rest until the next day, when he steamed up the river, and at noon on April 25, 1862, anchored before the defenceless city.

The Confederate ironclad *Mississippi* was burned as the fleet arrived. The garrisons in Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip became mutinous as soon as the Union ships had passed up, and on the 28th General Duncan was

obliged to surrender. The ironclad *Louisiana* was set on fire and blown up by her commander.

In a way Farragut's victory was the decisive naval battle of the Civil War. Napoleon III of France had been preparing to establish a French empire in tropical America. The division of the United States would remove the chief obstacle to his ambition. That he did not at once recognize the Confederacy is a fact that shows, perhaps better than any other in our history, the estimation in which Europeans then held the power of the American people. He did not dare to do it even after he had mustered the courage to invade Mexico. A comparison of the French and the American navies at the time Napoleon invaded Mexico will show that this is so. In the spring of 1862, however, he was negotiating with England for a joint intervention in aid of the Confederacy, and at the very moment when Farragut's mortar fleet opened fire on Fort Jackson he was consulting with a British emissary with that end in view. No decision in the matter was reached that day because Napoleon had heard about the New Orleans expedition, and he was cautious enough to await the result of Farragut's work. Had Farragut failed, France and England would have intervened. The capture of New Orleans, coming as it did after the unbroken series of advances which the navy had made on the Atlantic and the upper river, was a decisive factor in the preservation of the Union.

CHAPTER XXII

PRIVATEERS AND CRUISERS

In the Civil War the Federals had no use for privateers because the Confederacy had no commerce to destroy. There were many Federal cruisers—unarmored ships of considerable speed—but they were used on the blockade, or in searching for blockade runners and for the commerce-destroying cruisers sent out by the Confederates.

When the President of the Confederacy, on April 17, 1861, issued a proclamation "inviting all those who may desire by service in private armed vessels on the high seas to aid this government . . . to make application for commissions," he was following well-cherished American traditions. A Congress of seven of the Powers of Europe, gathered in Paris in 1856, declared that "privateering is and remains abolished," but the United States declined to join in the declaration chiefly because it was in the interest of nations that, like England and France, then supported large navies—something the American people were determined not to do. Once the secession movement had been carried to an extent where the Confederate Government was entitled to belligerent rights, privateering was justifiable. That the Union people should have called all Confederate armed ships pirates was natural enough during war times, but wholly unjustifiable in fact.

Pilot boat No. 7, of Charleston, S. C., was the first privateer fitted out under the proclamation of President Davis. She was named *Savannah*. She went to sea on June 3, 1861, and the next day captured the brig *Joseph*,

of Rockland, Me. She was then captured by the United States brig *Perry* and sent to New York. Her crew were prosecuted for piracy, but they were in due time held as prisoners of war and exchanged.

Scharf's "Confederate States Navy" describes seventeen privateers all told. Five of them were fitted out at New Orleans, and these captured twenty prizes. At no other point was such success attained. The efficiency of the blockade ended privateering enterprises, because it prevented sending in prizes.

The first of the Confederate armed cruisers fitted out was the *Sumter*, a merchantman that had been plying between New Orleans and Havana. She was slow under sail, but good for ten knots under steam and sail. She could carry coal for eight days' steaming. Commander Raphael Semmes was ordered, on April 18, 1861, to fit her out and, on June 30, he went to sea.

On the way to Cienfuegos seven merchantmen were taken, of which six were carried into that Spanish port while the seventh was retaken by her original crew. The six vessels left at Cienfuegos were returned to their owners by the Spanish authorities. From Cienfuegos the *Sumter* went to Curacoa, to Puerto Cabello, to Trinidad Island, to Maranham on the Brazil coast and then back to St. Pierre, Martinique. Here she was blockaded by the U. S. S. *Iroquois*, Captain J. S. Palmer, for nine days, but when Semmes was ready to sail he steamed towards the south side of the harbor until he found that the *Iroquois* was coming down swiftly to head him off when he doubled back under the land and went out the north side of the harbor unobserved.

The *Sumter* now crossed to Cadiz and went thence to Gibraltar. There she was effectually blockaded by three United States steamers and she was sold for a blockade runner. She had captured eighteen ships all

told, of which seven were destroyed, two were bonded (released on a bond given by the captain to pay the captors the value of the ship six months after the success of the Confederacy should be acknowledged) and the remainder were carried into some foreign port and eventually given to the original owners by the foreign authorities.

After leaving the *Sumter* Semmes was ordered to the *Alabama,* the most famous of the Confederate cruisers. The interest in the story of this ship is greatly increased on account of the attitude of the British Government and ruling classes at the time. For she was British built, she was manned by British citizens under Confederate officers and the work she did was almost wholly in the interest of British shipping.

"From the date of our independence it [England] had grudgingly yielded our just claims. The marvellous development of the American Republic had been regarded with marked disfavor by the aristocracy. . . . The breaking up of the great democracy was a welcome anticipation." (Foster's "Century of American Diplomacy.") Bluntly speaking, the British believed then, as they believed when they sent the Barbary pirates hunting American ships, that American prosperity on the high seas would be a detriment to British shipping—("By ——, we must put a check to those people; they are ruining our commerce here!") The British determined, therefore, to do everything possible to make permanent the rupture of the Union—everything, that is, short of an open break with the North.

At the very beginning of the secession movement the British secured an understanding with the French by which the two governments were to act in unison in American affairs. On reading a newspaper rumor that President Lincoln had issued a proclamation blockading the Southern ports, orders were immediately issued by the British

Government according the Confederates belligerent rights. And this was done, although Lord John Russell, the British minister of Foreign Affairs, had agreed with the American minister to take no such step until Mr. Charles Francis Adams, the newly appointed American minister, should arrive to give the views of the new administration.

Great Britain had declared that "Privateering is and remains abolished." A British work on international law (Willcock's, issued in 1863, and showing a violent antipathy toward the United States) declared that "should any nation, which has not assented, commission privateers, all the parties of that famous declaration, and indeed all others, are bound to regard the commission as null and void." But as soon as the Confederates commissioned privateers the British Government hastened to announce formally that it would recognize the commissions. And yet, looking to the possibility of a rupture with the United States, every effort was made to secure from the United States a promise to adhere to the Declaration of Paris.

On May 6, five days before he received an official copy of Lincoln's proclamation blockading the Southern ports, Lord Russell wrote to Lord Lyons, British minister to Washington, and called the United States "the northern portion of the late union." In the despatches sent at this time Lord Lyons was instructed secretly to enter into communication with the Confederates, who were to be urged to consent to all the paragraphs of the Declaration of Paris except that relating to privateers.

Then came the *Trent* affair. The *Trent* was a British steamer that sailed from Havana on November 7, 1861, bound to St. Thomas, carrying John Y. Mason, whom the Confederates had sent as an envoy to France, and John Slidell, envoy to Great Britain. On the 8th she was stopped in the Bahama channel by the U. S. S. *San Jacinto*, Captain Charles Wilkes (who had been cruising in search

of the *Sumter*), when the Confederates were taken from her.

Against such acts as this, when committed by British commanders in the years before the war of 1812, the United States had protested in vain. The British courts had sanctioned such acts and the British Government had haughtily refused to consider any proposition to end them.

But when it was learned in England that the Confederates had been taken from the *Trent* the act was denounced as a national affront. The suggestion that it was the unauthorized act of an individual was jeered. Instead of waiting to learn what the United States Government might have to say (there was no cable in those days), or showing the least disposition to negotiate, Lord Russell at once ordered the British minister at Washington to issue an ultimatum:—"Surrender the Confederates and apologize within seven days or fight," said he in substance, though not, of course, literally. At the same time orders to place the British navy and army at once upon a war footing were issued. Troops were embarked for Halifax and, as the first of the fleet of transports left her pier, her band played "Dixie," while the soldiers and populace cheered wildly. When in the midst of all these preparations for war Minister Adams officially informed Lord Russell that Wilkes had acted without authority the information was suppressed. "The arming continued with ostentatious publicity and public opinion was encouraged to drift into a state of hostility toward the United States." ("The Case of the United States to be Laid Before the Tribunal of Arbitration" at Geneva, p. 38.)

Having no warships or means of building them, the Confederates, under the act of their Congress approved May 10, 1861, sent Commander J. D. Bullock to England as naval agent to secure them. He reached Liverpool June 4. Fraser, Trenholm & Co., a branch of the firm

of Fraser & Co., of Charleston, S. C., were appointed financial agents, and they were kept in funds by sending cotton through the blockade to their order.

Captain Bullock was under orders to build warships; but a cruiser for the destruction of American commerce, and not an ironclad for opening the blockade, was the first ship built. Her keel was laid at Liverpool, ostensibly for the Italian Government. The protests of the American minister, who presented the facts to Lord Russell, were, of course, unheeded. Under the name of *Oreto* she cleared from Liverpool on March 22, 1862, for Palermo, *and Jamaica;* she went to the Bahamas. There she was delivered to Captain J. N. Maffitt, of the Confederate navy, who took her to Green Cay, hoisted the Confederate flag, renamed her the *Florida* and armed her with rifled cannon that had been sent with other war material in another vessel.

This work was done by Maffitt with eleven officers and eleven foremast hands, among all of whom the yellow fever began to rage before the task was more than started. With his war material on board Maffitt headed across to Cardenas where he arrived with but one fireman able to do duty, and but four men able to keep the deck. There Maffitt himself was stricken. The Spaniards sent a physician to care for him, and he recovered only to learn that several of his crew were lost and but twelve men could be secured. With these he went to Havana. On finding he could get no men there he determined to run to Mobile. He left Havana at 9 o'clock at night on September 1, 1862, and at 3 o'clock on the 4th arrived among the blockaders off Mobile. With the British flag flying he steamed boldly in until he arrived where a British ship would naturally stop, then he sent up his own flag and made a most exciting run for Fort Morgan, which he reached in safety.

After refitting at Mobile, Maffitt ran the blockade once

more on January 15, 1863. The gunnery of the United States ships was so poor that he escaped with no harm worth mention. Being cordially received in the British ports he visited, Maffitt was able to continue his cruise without material difficulty. His most important act was done on May 6, 1863, when he fitted out a captured brig, the *Clarence*, of Baltimore, as a cruiser and sent her, under Lieutenant C. W. Read, to the coast of the United States. Read captured five vessels before June 10. To one of these he transferred his men and guns because she was superior for his purpose, and because a change of ships would assist in eluding the Federal ships sure to be sent after him. The new vessel was the schooner *Tacony*. With her, ten prizes were captured. Changing, then, to the schooner *Archer*, Read went to the coast of Maine and entering Portland, he cut out the revenue cutter *Caleb Cushing* (June 27). An expedition that went in chase of him at this time captured him. He was charged with piracy, but was finally exchanged. Meantime the *Florida* had gone to Brest, France, where she remained six months and was fully refitted in the government dock. On account of ill health Maffitt left the ship and Lieutenant C. M. Morris took command. He took the *Florida* to Bahia, Brazil, where the U. S. S. *Wachusett*, Captain N. Collins, took her from under the Brazilian guns (October 7, 1864) and sent her to the United States. The Washington authorities ordered her returned to her crew in Bahia, but while she was lying at Newport News with only an engineer and two assistants on board, the seacocks were opened and she sank at her mooring. She had captured thirty-seven merchantmen all told. As Brazil had allowed the Confederates to violate her waters repeatedly it was not difficult to pacify her for the lack of respect shown in taking the *Florida*.

After starting work on the *Florida*, Commander Bullock

contracted with the Lairds, shipbuilders of Liverpool, for another cruiser (no battleship was wanted yet) that became the *Alabama.* The name of the builders is of note only because one of them was a member of Parliament who openly boasted in a speech, made in the House of Commons (February 5, 1863), of what he was doing, and he was enthusiastically applauded by a large majority of that House, although all knew that he was violating the law of the land in building the ship.

The work on this ship was carried on so well that Minister Adams was not able to secure conclusive evidence that she was a Confederate cruiser until June 23, 1862, only about a month before she sailed. The British refused to admit the evidence sufficient to detain the ship. On July 21, 23 and 25 evidence that could not be denied or ignored was transmitted to Lord Russell, but it was purposely held in abeyance until the ship could be so far completed that she was able to sail on a "trial trip"—July 29. When she had gone it was announced that she could not lawfully sail, but no effort was made to compel her to return to port although she lay at Anglesea for two days more.

At the Azores the *Alabama* was fitted out as a Confederate cruiser, with Confederate officers and British seamen. Some of her crew had had experience in naval ships. Thereafter, the British authorities did everything possible to favor this ship.

In no way, however, was the British desire to see the *Alabama* succeed shown so conclusively as when Lord Russell wrote to the Liverpool chamber of Commerce, in regard to a British cargo that the *Alabama* had destroyed in a captured United States merchantman. Russell said:

"British property on board a vessel belonging to one of the belligerents must be subject to all the risks and contigencies of war, so far as the capture of the vessel is con-

cerned. The owners of any British property, not being contraband of war, on board a Federal vessel captured and destroyed by a Confederate vessel of war, may claim in a Confederate prize-court compensation for the destruction of such property."

Not only did Lord Russell wish to the *Alabama* success in her cruise against American merchantmen; here was an unmistakable notice to British merchants that they must not ship their cargoes in American ships. The British authorities had seen how the work of the *Sumter* had driven American merchantmen from the West Indies. They had noted, too, that American shipowners were already seeking protection from British Confederate cruisers by placing their vessels under the British flag. The *Alabama* was allowed to go to sea, and once under the Confederate flag was in every way encouraged to destroy all American high-seas commerce, *in order to drive the American flag off the ocean.* Said the Marquis of Salisbury (he was then Lord Cecil), in the House of Commons:

"They [the Southern people] were the natural allies of this country as great producers of the articles we needed and great consumers of the articles we supplied. The North, on the other hand, *kept an opposition shop in the same departments of trade as ourselves.*"

Lord Russell himself said: "It was the great object of the British Government to preserve for the nation the lucrative trade of shipbuilding."

For stopping a British merchantman and taking Confederate envoys from her the British Government threatened the United States with war within seven days, but when the *Alabama* destroyed British cargoes the owners were told to apply to the Confederate prize-courts for redress, and, in future, to keep their cargoes out of American ships. As Professor Goldwin Smith said, "No na-

tion ever inflicted upon another a more flagrant or more maddening wrong."

Of the work of the *Alabama* as a cruiser it is necessary to say little, for the reason that it was on the whole devoted to capturing American merchantmen. Semmes was able and enthusiastic. He haunted the highways of the sea, remaining on each station until it was time to look for the appearance of a Federal ship of greater force, when he went elsewhere. The ships captured were usually burned. Sometimes the light of the fires brought humane captains of other ships to the scene, hoping to rescue those who were supposed to be in dire distress. These ships were, of course, at once taken and burned, an act that roused a strong sentiment of hatred among Northern seamen.

On January 11, 1863, the *Alabama* appeared off Galveston, where the converted merchantman *Hatteras* was sent in chase of her. The *Hatteras* was shot to pieces in just thirteen minutes, and but for the activity of the *Alabama's* men in rescuing them, the crew would have gone down with her.

From Galveston the *Alabama* went to the coast of Brazil and thence to the Cape of Good Hope. A prize taken on the way was fitted out as the cruiser *Tuscaloosa*. Semmes claimed for her the privileges of a regular man-o'-war, and the civil authorities at the Cape inclined to agree with him, but the admiral on the station, Sir Baldwin Walker, pointed out that putting a few small guns and a small prize crew on the vessel had not changed her character as a prize. The dispute was referred to London and, after the *Tuscaloosa* had sailed, the Home Government decided that the vessel was a prize and should have been detained. "These instructions were calculated to afford a cheap satisfaction to the United States, without injuring the Confederates." (Soley.) But contrary to expectations the

Tuscaloosa came into the Cape once more and the governor at once detained her. "This was not at all what the Home Government wanted; and it immediately disavowed the act and restored the *Tuscaloosa*" to her commander.

While at Cape Town, Semmes increased his crew and sold a prize, both acts being contrary to the British law, and then went to the East Indies where he remained six months and destroyed many ships. Returning thence to the Atlantic, the ship *Tycoon* was taken on April 27, 1864, and she was the last vessel destroyed by the *Alabama.* Being in need of repairs, Semmes took his ship to Cherbourg, France, where she arrived on June 11. On the 14th the U. S. S. *Kearsarge,* Captain John A. Winslow, arrived, and Semmes sent word to her that he would come out for a fight as soon as he could; for he had grown weary of commerce destruction.

In model, steam-power and armament the *Alabama* was, for her size, and purpose (a cruiser), the ideal of the British naval architect of her day. In like manner the *Kearsarge* was the American ideal. The *Kearsarge* measured 1,031 tons, the *Alabama* 1,016. The *Kearsarge* carried 163 men, the *Alabama* 149. The *Kearsarge* was armed with two 11-inch Dahlgrens, four short 32-pounders and a 30-pounder rifle; the *Alabama* carried a Blakely 100-pounder rifle and a 68-pounder smoothbore for pivots, and six long 32-pounders in broadside. The *Kearsarge* used five of her guns in the broadside, the *Alabama* seven. (Report of Captain Winslow, July 30, 1864). The *Alabama* fired 384 pounds of metal at a broadside to the 366 of the *Kearsarge.* The *Kearsarge* was one of the vessels that had been authorized by Congress during the session before the Lincoln administration came into power.

After fitting out his ship as well as possible, Semmes sailed out of port soon after 9 o'clock, on Sunday morning, June 19, 1864. Captain Winslow at once headed the

Kearsarge off shore, "fearing the question of jurisdiction." When six or seven miles off shore he turned back, heading directly at the *Alabama.*

As Semmes had pivoted his guns to starboard he now sheered off so as to bring that side of his ship into action, and at 10:57 began firing. The *Kearsarge* soon sheered off also to avoid being raked and thereafter the two ships steered in spirals round and round, the diameter of the spirals growing smaller with each turn until seven circles had been made.

During this time the crew of the *Alabama* fired rapidly —twice as fast as the men of the *Kearsarge*—but the Federal fire was made slowly in order that it might be more effective. The two 11-inch guns were carefully aimed to sink the *Alabama* while the others were aimed to clear her decks. The effect was deadly. At the end of an hour, or a little more, the *Alabama* was sinking. Turning away, Semmes tried to run her ashore, but the movement was made too late. It was quickly seen that she would go down with all hands unless something was done to secure help, and the flag was hauled down. Owing to a misunderstanding, of the kind that have been common enough in ship duels, both ships fired their guns after the flag was down. At 12:20 the fires under the *Alabama's* boilers were drowned and at 12:30 she sank stern first.

The wounded and the men who could not swim were got afloat in such boats as were unhurt. Semmes and many of his crew remained on the ship until the waves lapped the deck. Then Semmes threw his sword into the sea and jumped overboard, with the others that had remained. It is a good man that fights till his ship is sinking.

Captain Winslow called on the captain of the British yacht *Deerhound* to help pick up the men seen in the water and it was done; for the *Kearsarge* had only two boats in condition for use. A French pilot boat carried some of

the crew ashore. The *Deerhound* took Semmes and about forty others to England, an act that excited much anger in the United States, although the act was, of course, entirely right. The British had been so persistent in their underhand efforts to destroy the Union that the American people were not in a mental condition to give a sober judgment. The anger of the Americans was greatly increased when Captain Bedford Pim, R.N., who had written two books to show his hatred for the "Yankees," led in raising a sum of money with which to purchase a handsome sword to give to Semmes in place of the one that had been thrown into the sea.

As showing the difference in the gunnery of the two ships it is noted that the *Alabama* fired 370 shot and shell, of which but twenty-eight hit the *Kearsarge*, and of the twenty-eight, only five struck her in or below the gun-deck. The *Kearsarge* fired 173 shots, of which fifty-five were from the 11-inch Dahlgrens. It is not known how many struck the *Alabama*. One of the *Alabama's* 100-pounder shells entered the hull of the *Kearsarge* and penetrated until it lodged in the stern-post, but it did not explode. The friends of Semmes declared that if this shell had been of good quality it would have destroyed the stern-post, thus ruining the steering gear of the *Kearsarge* and putting her at the mercy of the *Alabama*. The fact is that if the percussion cap had been in order to explode the shell, the explosion would have occurred long before the stern-post was reached. Moreover, this shell did not hit the *Kearsarge* until the *Alabama* had been cut up beyond salvation. Bad as were the American gunners of that period, the British on whom Semmes had to depend were worse. And Semmes was unable to train his gunners because he lacked ammunition.

The *Kearsarge* was also called an ironclad because she had a cable flaked on the outside opposite the machinery

after the fashion adopted on the Mississippi River. This armor stopped two shot that struck it, but these would have had no influence on the result if they had penetrated. The shot of the 100-pounder would have cut the chain readily.

Next to the *Alabama* the *Shenandoah* was the most successful of the Confederate cruisers. She was a full-rigged ship with auxiliary steam-power and rather swift for her class. She sailed from London on October 8, 1864, and was transferred to Captain J. I. Waddell at the Madeiras, where she was fitted out as a man-o'-war. She was then taken to the Pacific for the destruction of the American whaling fleet, at which she was employed until some time after the end of the war. On June 22, 1865, on overhauling the whaler *Milo*, of New Bedford (Captain J. C. Hawes), the crew of the *Shenandoah* were told that the war was over. Captain Waddell refused to believe the statement. The *Milo* was bonded and four other ships were burned that day. They were all whalers and were found in latitude 63′40″ north and longitude 178′50″ west. On the 23d another whaler was taken, on the 25th still another and then on the 26th six were captured. All but one of the eight were burned, the one being bonded for use as a cartel to carry the prisoners. The final day's work of destroying the whalers was June 28, when eleven were captured, of which nine were burned and two bonded. The *Shenandoah* then headed south and, on August 2, fell in with the English bark *Barracouta*, from San Francisco to Liverpool, the captain of which confirmed the news given by the captain of the whaler *Milo*. The final entry in the *Shenandoah's* log says:

> Nov. 5.—Arrived in the Mersey, off Liverpool, and on Monday the 6th surrendered the *Shenandoah* to the British nation, by letter to Lord John R. Russell.

She had captured thirty-eight vessels of which thirty-two were destroyed.

In March, 1862, the Lairds began building two iron-clad, turreted rams (armor $4\frac{1}{2}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick), that were armed with two 9-inch guns in each turret. They were really formidable ships. When nearly ready for sea, however, it appears that their very power decided the British Government to hold them. For it was seen, as Minister Adams wrote to Lord Russell, that to let them go was to declare war on the United States, and England was not quite ready to do that *at that time.* Conditions had changed since the *Trent* affair. In November, 1861, the date of the *Trent* affair, the United States had been able to add to the thirty-two available steamers of the old navy only seventy-three converted merchantmen, carrying an average of less than three guns each. We had some warships in hand, but what the quality would be no one could tell. England had, at that time, 252 steam warships (Busk), not counting armed transports, floating batteries or armed store ships. Even their small "screw gun vessels" of four guns might hope to meet our converted merchantmen with success. But in 1863, when the Confederate ironclads were ready, the United States had 588 well-armed warships, of which 284 had been built within two years; of these, twenty-four were of the well-tried *Monitor* class, and all were armed with the superior Dahlgren guns of a calibre up to fifteen inches or with rifled guns of a calibre up to eight inches. More important yet—most important of all—*these ships were manned by men who had been under fire, and every man of every crew would have understood why he was fighting had a war with England been necessary.* So we escaped war once more *because we were prepared to make a good fight.*

To show good will to the Confederates, however, the British Admiralty bought in the two ships, paying for them

$150,000 in excess of the contract price. "And while the loss of such formidable ships was a severe disappointment to the Confederate Government, the money was much needed at the time, and was beneficially applied to other purposes of the navy." (Scharf.)

Contracts for building six warships were made in France, but of these only one, the battleship *Stonewall*, got away to sea. She carried a 300-pounder Armstrong rifle in her forward turret and was protected with $4\frac{3}{4}$-inch iron. She was first sold to the Danish Government and then, while at Copenhagen, was transferred to the Confederates, and placed under Captain T. J. Page. He sailed from Copenhagen on January 6, 1865, and went to the Spanish coast, where, in the port of Corunna, he found the United States steamer *Niagara*, carrying ten 150-pound Parrott rifles, and the *Sacramento*, armed with two 11-inch and two 9-inch Dahlgrens, all under the command of Commodore T. T. Craven. Page did all he could to induce Craven to come out and fight, but Craven declined to do so. By the standards of naval honor at that time Craven should have gone out. It will never do to weigh the chances of success too closely, and Craven deserved the disgrace that came upon him. Yet it is easy to see now that with her concentration of power and her thick armor the *Stonewall* was more than a match for the two wooden vessels under Craven. The *Stonewall* eventually went to Havana, where, the war having ended, she was turned over to the United States.

All told, the Confederates had afloat nineteen cruisers, though it is not certain that some of them were properly so-called. They captured 257 American ships and thus inflicted the blow upon American shipping which the British authorities had intended that they should inflict. As every reader knows, the United States eventually called upon the British to pay for the damage thus intentionally inflicted. Very grudgingly the British agreed to arbitrate

the matter. The result of that arbitration has never been well comprehended by the American people. The British were compelled to pay the actual losses sustained through the destruction of certain enumerated ships. *But it did not pay a penny for the damage sustained in driving American shipping off the seven seas.*

The damage thus incidentally inflicted was the one object which the British had in view when they allowed the Confederate cruisers to go to sea, contrary to law and right. And to this day the British are enjoying the ill-gotten carrying trade thus taken from our shipping. Yet it is impossible to induce the American people to do anything to give the American flag its old-time place upon the ocean.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE MISSISSIPPI OPENED—EVOLUTION OF THE TORPEDO

New Orleans having been captured, Farragut was anxious to repeat the work thus done by going to Mobile, the forts of which were then not in good order, and their supply of ammunition was short. He saw that he could pass into Mobile Bay easily and when there could compel the surrender of the forts guarding the entrance to the bay much as he compelled those on the Mississippi to do so. The evacuation of Pensacola by the Confederates on May 10 increased his desire to do this, but in the meantime the Navy Department had ordered him, with his fleet of sea-going ships, up the Mississippi, hoping to take the Confederate works on the banks and restore the whole valley to the Union.

On June 18 Farragut arrived within view of Vicksburg, 400 miles (all within the territory of the enemy) from New Orleans, and on the 28th the well-manned, well-armed batteries, three miles long, were passed. But Vicksburg was not captured. The Confederate batteries were on bluffs so high that the naval guns could not be elevated to reach them. The fact that 1,500 soldiers had been sent along to hold the forts that Farragut was expected to capture, including the three miles of fort at Vicksburg, shows the state of mind prevailing at Washington at that time.

As noted, the river fleet, under Flag-Officer Davis, joined Farragut at Vicksburg. On July 15, while the two fleets

were dozing at their anchors, the Confederate ironclad *Arkansas*, Commander Isaac N. Brown, came down the Yazoo. Deserters had said she was coming, and two gunboats and an Ellet ram were sent to meet her, but she spanked the three out of her way, and then ran amuck through the combined fleets, to the great mortification of Farragut. But for the worthlessness of her machinery she might have destroyed a large part of the Federal fleet, since her armor was sufficient and her guns were good. She was then moored under the batteries at Vicksburg and the work of fitting her out continued.

When it was learned that Farragut's deep-water ships could not take Vicksburg even with the aid of 1,500 soldiers, and that low water might hold them idle in the river there, when they were needed elsewhere, they were ordered to New Orleans. The whole expedition had been a failure, through no fault of Farragut, but his chagrin was modified when (July 16, 1862) he was made a rear-admiral by act of Congress—the first of the rank in the American navy.

The retreat of the Federal fleet having left the river to the Confederates, they fortified the bluffs at Port Hudson and thus held undisputed sway between that place and Vicksburg. This gave them the navigation of the Red River and an overland route to Matamoras, Mexico, by which large quantities of supplies were obtained for their armies in the East. An adequate advance was therefore planned against Port Hudson and Vicksburg, General U. S. Grant being at the head of the army sent against Vicksburg. Of Grant's operations nothing need he said here except that he went down along the west side of the river, crossed over to take the Confederates in the rear, and that to facilitate this work as well as to get control of the river, Acting Rear-Admiral Porter, who was at that time in command of the upper river fleet, sent two of his boats down past Vicksburg. The *Arkansas* had been

destroyed by her own crew, meantime, because her machinery had given out when she was under the fire of the Union ironclad *Essex*. The river was, therefore, under Union control until the Confederates, by good aggressive fighting, captured both of Porter's boats.

On hearing of this disaster to Porter's vessels, Farragut determined to go up the river, even though his ships were unfitted for such work, since at this time it was imperative to shut off the Confederate supplies coming from Red River in order to cripple the Confederate garrisons—starve them—at both Vicksburg and Port Hudson. The *Hartford*, *Monongahela*, *Mississippi* and *Richmond*, all sea-going ships, each with a gunboat lashed alongside to help as a tug, anchored below Port Hudson on March 14, 1863. Farragut then issued a general order, one sentence of which ought to be framed and hung up where all can see it on every ship of the navy, in every room at the naval academy and (printed in type which old eyes can read easily) in every room of the Navy Department. For, along with such instructions as were needed by his captains in passing the forts, he said:

"*The best protection against the enemy's fire is a well-directed fire from our own guns.*"

Farragut did not fail to appreciate the real value of armor—he saw that it was necessary—but he saw also that it was, bluntly speaking, a cowardice breeder (he called ironclads "cowardly things")—something that inclined a captain to make a defensive rather than an aggressive fight.

The dash past Port Hudson was begun at 10 o'clock on the night after Farragut arrived ready for the task. The *Hartford* with the *Albatross* alongside led the way and passed successfully. The *Mississippi* grounded and was burned to keep the Confederates from getting her. The others were disabled and had to drop down because the

gunboats could not handle them. In spite of these losses the movement succeeded. Farragut, with his two vessels, was able to stop the Red River trade until Porter came down with reinforcements. He thus materially aided in the capture of Vicksburg on July 4, and Port Hudson on July 9, 1863. From that time on the Mississippi was restored to the United States.

A feature of the naval work on the coast of the Atlantic that needs to be considered here is that in connection with the evolution of the torpedo and its effect upon the course of the war.

The torpedo was not a new device, strictly speaking. David Bushnell, of Connecticut, had made a submarine boat with which he navigated New York bay and barely missed blowing one British man-o'-war out of water, during the Revolution. Robert Fulton, during the first few years of the nineteenth century, demonstrated that submarine boats propelled by hand could be used with decisive effect in defending harbors, but having boasted that such boats would make warships useless, a boast that he could not make good, he antagonized the naval men and failed to get his devices adopted. Colonel Samuel Colt, inventor of the revolver, devised a torpedo system nearly twenty years before the Civil War, but he, too, failed to get it into use, and it was, therefore, with traditions of failure of a kind around it that the torpedo came up for consideration during the Civil War. Naturally the Confederates took hold of it first, for it was exclusively a weapon of defence, since they were waging a war that was defensive.

On July 7, 1861, a number of torpedoes made of boiler iron and buoyed with oil barrels were turned loose in the Potomac, near Aquia Creek, in the hope that they would drift against the Union vessels near at hand, but they were discovered and the fuses (open and easily seen) were extinguished by a boat's crew. Torpedoes were found in

the Savannah River on February 13, 1862, and in the Neuse in March following. On April 21, 1862, the Confederates passed an act offering to pay prize money to anyone who would destroy a Union ship by means of a torpedo. This was followed in October by the establishment of a torpedo bureau under an army officer, and a "Naval Submarine Battery Service" under Captain M. F. Maury. Torpedo stations were established at Wilmington, Charleston, Savannah and Mobile before the end of 1862. (Scharf.)

On December 12, 1862, the Federal gunboat *Cairo* was sunk in the Yazoo River by a torpedo that had been made of a demijohn and was fired by a string pulled by a man who was concealed in an earthwork on shore. About two months later the monitor *Montauk*, Captain Worden, went up the Ogechee River, in Georgia, and taking a position under the fire of a fort, she shelled and destroyed the Confederate cruiser *Nashville*, that had been trying to run to sea. She suffered no damage from the fire of the fort, but when dropping down the river after the *Nashville* was burned, she struck a percussion torpedo that laid her up for a month. In July following the gunboat *Baron de Kalb* was destroyed in the Yazoo in a similar manner.

The torpedoes used during the war were of various kinds. Heavy timber frames were moored in the channels where Union ships were expected, and to these frames were secured receptacles filled with powder and fitted with percussion caps. Beer kegs were favorite receptacles. Tin cans were used. In many cases (in the channel at Mobile, for instance) the torpedo was made buoyant and was held in place by an anchor. As these swayed with the tide they usually turned their percussion caps away from a vessel that approached with the tide. Many floating torpedoes were sent adrift in the hope that that they would

chance to hit a Union ship. A published list shows that twenty-nine Union ships were destroyed by torpedoes of one kind and another and eleven more were injured.

The most interesting feature of the torpedo work was that done at Charleston in the development of the submarine torpedo boat. One submarine, called a fish torpedo, and two torpedo boats that were designed to float with the upper skin just awash were in use there. The submarine was constructed at Mobile where in a trial in the bay she went down and drowned all hands—nine men. She was then raised and taken to Charleston. She was fitted with fins on the side to help keep her under water while moving forward, and with ballast tanks to submerge her. A screw turned by eight men propelled her and a percussion torpedo was affixed to the end of a pole projecting from her bow.

While Lieutenant Payne and a crew were fitting her for an attack on the blockaders, in February, 1864, a wave from a passing steamer swept over her and she went down with all but Payne. When she was raised one of her builders took her for a trial trip and getting fast on a mud bank under water all hands were suffocated. Once more she was raised, and although she had killed thirty-one men, she was promptly manned by volunteers. Lieutenant George E. Dixon, of the 21st Alabama Infantry, then took her to sea during the night of February 17, 1864, and fired her torpedo against the side of the U. S. S. *Housatonic*, sinking her within four minutes. The torpedo boat was just awash at the time, and the wave thrown up by the explosion overwhelmed her with all her crew. The *Housatonic* lost four men. It is a comfort to think that the descendants of the men who repeatedly manned this boat are now among the most loyal of the citizens of the republic.

A somewhat similar boat (cigar shaped) was made by

Mr. T. D. Stoney, of Charleston, but there is no further record of her. Captain F. D. Fee, C.S.A., built a steam torpedo boat that floated with her deck just awash, and she exploded a torpedo against the side of the *New Ironsides*, but the explosion was not powerful enough to damage the ship seriously.

A review of all the facts seems to show that Charleston successfully resisted the Federal attacks chiefly because of the torpedoes in the harbor. While the writer was discussing this matter with Bishop John Johnson, of Charleston, who, as a major in the Confederate service, helped to defend Fort Sumter, he said:

"The moral effect of these obstructions was excellent—excellent."

How they kept the Federal fleet from passing Fort Sumter and reaching the city on April 7, 1863, is told by the reports of the officers of the various ships as well as that of Rear Admiral DuPont. The assaulting ships included seven monitors, the broadside ironclad *New Ironsides* and a nondescript ironclad called the *Keokuk*. The *Weehawken*, Captain John Rodgers, with a timber device under her bow with which to pick up torpedoes, led the line. Captain Rodgers, in his report, said:

"We succeeded in arriving under the fire of Fort Sumter at about 2:50 P. M. . . . We approached *very close* to the obstructions extending from Fort Sumter to Fort Moultrie—as near, indeed, as I could get *without running upon them*. . . . *The appearance* was so formidable that upon deliberate judgment I thought it right not to entangle the vessel in obstructions that I did not think we could have passed through."

The "obstructions" were dummy torpedoes, as Bishop Johnson told the writer. Because they lacked suitable material for real torpedoes the Confederates laid these "Quakers." Moreover, there was a passage through the

line, there was deep water clear of the few real topedoes that had been laid and when the *New Ironsides* happened to get into position over one of the real torpedoes which was laid in the channel off Fort Wagner (well out of range of Fort Sumter), all efforts to explode the thing failed. The Federal ships should have found a way through the "obstructions," or they should have made one—as Farragut had done at New Orleans and was to do again at Mobile.

In failing to pass the "obstructions," through which he could have steamed easily, Rodgers threw the Federal line into confusion and held his own ship and some of the others among a number of range buoys that had been placed by the Confederates to give accuracy to the guns in their forts. So turrets were jammed, port stoppers were riveted in place —five of the ships were disabled and all had to retreat. The flagship *New Ironsides* was held so far out of range (see Johnson's "Defence of Charleston," p. 49) that she escaped damage. In his detailed official report DuPont speaks of the "obstructions" eight times. In the first despatch he says "Charleston cannot be taken by a purely naval attack." There was but one Farragut in the navy, apparently, at that time, and Rodgers was by no means a T. A. M. Craven.

Rear-Admiral Dahlgren replaced DuPont a little later. His reputation rested on the excellence of the cannon he had developed, and on that it yet rests. The army captured Charleston.

The Federals used torpedoes on one notable occasion only. The Confederates had built an ironclad called the *Albemarle* on the banks of the Neuse River, intending to use her in clearing the Federals from the North Carolina sounds. She came down the river on April 19. and again on May 5, and on each occasion she played havoc with the gunboats that opposed her, but because of the defects al-

ways found in the Confederate-built ships it was thought advisable to lay her up at Plymouth until another ironclad building on the Tar River was completed to aid her.

While the *Albemarle* was thus in waiting, Lieutenant W. B. Cushing, U.S.N., who had won his commission by repeated "acts of successful daring," went up the river (October 27, 1864) in an open steam launch with a torpedo secured to the end of a pole projecting from her bow. On arriving opposite the *Albemarle*, Cushing found her surrounded by a log boom which was placed so far from her that his torpedo pole was not long enough to reach across the intervening space. Just as he learned this discouraging fact he was discovered by sentinels on shore. The soldiers stationed there began to shoot at him, and a huge pile of fat pine knots was fired, the flames illuminating the whole river.

To any other than a Cushing this expedition would have been a bloody failure, but, turning his launch out into the stream, he swung her around a wide circle and then headed straight for the boom abreast the *Albemarle*. Two howitzers and a score of muskets were fired at him, but he held his way until his launch slid up on and part way across the boom, within reach of the ironclad. At that moment a 100-pounder was shoved from a port directly in front of him, yet he coolly placed his torpedo against the hull of the ship and fired it just as the cannon was discharged at him. The cannon-shot flew high; the torpedo destroyed the *Albemarle*. It was for this deed that the first modern torpedo boat used in our new navy was named the *Cushing*.

CHAPTER XXIV

FARRAGUT AT MOBILE BAY

Mobile lies at the head of a shoal, bell-shaped bay, that is about thirty miles long and fifteen wide at the lower end. A dredged channel now runs to the city, but in Civil War times the only deep water (20 to 24 feet) was in a pocket two and a half by six miles large in the lower bay, and in the channel leading thence to the open water. The lower side of the bay was protected on the east side of the channel by a long sandy point, on the end of which stood Fort Morgan, a brick structure mounting eighty-six guns, of which the best were 10-inch smoothbores and 8-inch rifles. On the west side of the channel, which lay close under the walls of Fort Morgan, was a shoal that arose above water eventually and was called Dauphin Island. Fort Gaines stood on this island, but it was so far from the channel as to be of no account in the defence of the bay against Farragut. Since this shoal might have been crossed by such gunboats as the Federals used in the Mississippi, the Confederates blocked it by driving rows of piles from Fort Gaines well out to the channel. Then to cover a channel that led westerly behind a row of islands to New Orleans (Grant Pass) Fort Powell was built on a sandbar beside that channel. This fort was not quite finished when Farragut came. As an aid to the forts, the main channel was filled with torpedoes, buoyant and anchored in place, save for a passage about 480 feet wide on the side toward Fort Morgan that was reserved for blockade runners. There were thirty-six torpedoes all

told. A red buoy marked the limit of open water and black buoys the location of the torpedoes.

"A ship passing between that buoy [the red one] and the shore would be exposed to the fire at short range of seven 10-inch Columbiads, three 8-inch guns, two 8-inch Blakely rifles, two 7-inch Brooke rifles, some 6.4-inch rifles, several 32-pounders and the rifle fire of the sharpshooters." (Report General D. H. Maury, C.S.A.)

The naval defences of the bay included a converted river steamer and two gunboats built for the purpose, all of which had good guns and very poor hulls and machinery, as usual. Besides these the Confederates had an ironclad called the *Tennessee* that just missed being a most formidable ship. She was of the usual casemate type, but the casemate walls extended over the sides of the hull like the eaves of a country house and then were turned back toward the hull which they reached below the water line. The knuckle thus formed was filled in solid with timber. No vessel then afloat could have broken in her sides by ramming. Her armor was from five to six inches thick, and she was armed with 7-inch and 6.4-inch Brooke rifles.

Thus far the *Tennessee* was excellent. Her machinery, however, was defective. There was no effective way of forcing the draught in case her smokestack should be shot away, her port shutters were so arranged that a chance shot might rivet them in place when shut, and, last and worst of all, her tiller chains and her spare tiller gear all lay in fair view on the after-deck.

Admiral Franklin Buchanan (he had been promoted for his part in the *Merrimac's* attack on the Federal ships at Hampton Roads) was in command of the fleet, and General R. L. Page, who had been a commander in the old navy, was in command of Fort Morgan.

The fleet which Farragut gathered off Mobile in July, 1864, included the single-turret monitors *Tecumseh*,

Commander T. A. M. Craven, and *Manhattan*, Commander J. W. A. Nicholson; the double-turret monitors *Winnebego*, Commander T. H. Stevens, and *Chickasaw*, Lieutenant G. H. Perkins. The flagship was the *Hartford*, Captain Drayton. The best battery in the wooden fleet, by the standard of the day, was on the *Brooklyn*, Captain James Alden. She carried twenty 9-inch Dahlgrens and four Parrott rifles, of which two were 100-pounders. There were twelve other unarmored ships and gunboats in the attacking fleet, and they carried guns varying from a 150-pounder rifle to a 12-pounder howitzer, the total number of guns in the fleet being 159, of which more than half were 9-inch smoothbores or better.

After soul-trying delays Farragut at last had this fleet in hand, on August 4, 1864, and preparations for passing the forts next morning were completed. Farragut's work at this time may very well be compared with that done by DuPont at Charleston, in April, 1863, as already described. Thus DuPont ordered his ships to go in against the ebb-tide so that if any one was disabled she could float with the current out of range. Farragut ordered his ships *to go in with the flood-tide.* Then a small vessel having been lashed beside each large one, tug-fashion, he wrote an order saying:

"If one or more ships be disabled *their partners must carry them through,* if possible, but if they cannot, then *the next astern must render the required assistance.*"

DuPont was thinking of securing the safety of his ships; Farragut thought only of going through, happen what might.

Another sentence in Farragut's general order is memorable. "It will be the object of the admiral to get as close to the fort as possible before opening fire."

At 6:10 o'clock in the morning on August 5, 1864, Farragut's unarmored ships crossed the outer bar of

Mobile Bay. The monitors that had passed the night further in, then joined the fleet, taking position ahead of the unarmored ships, with the *Tecumseh* leading all. The *Brooklyn* led the unarmored ships, because she had a device for picking up torpedoes, and because she could train four guns dead ahead, something that none of the ships behind her could do. But the *Hartford*, happily, was next in line.

At 6:55 the whole fleet moved forward in the channel. The eager captain of the *Tecumseh* fired both of his guns as he started his ship. Ten minutes later Fort Morgan opened on the fleet, the *Brooklyn* replied immediately, the other ships of the fleet joined in as their guns would bear and the Confederate ships steamed out from the shelter of Fort Morgan and took a position behind the torpedo line where they could rake the Federal ships coming to the turn in the channel found just abreast the fort.

With the long line of Union ships, flag-draped, hurling storms of shells and shrapnel upon the fort and earthwork, and the fort firing back with shot that knocked sprays of smoking splinters from the sides of the ships, while the Confederate ships lay grim and silent, it was an awe-inspiring scene. The smoke, however, soon began to fog in fleet and fort, and then Farragut left his place on the poop of the *Hartford* and climbed the port main rigging until he was above the smoke. His own captain and the captain of the *Metacomet*, the gunboat along side (Lieutenant Commander Jouett), were then within easy reach of his voice, and the whole fleet was under his eye. As the smoke arose he climbed higher until the futtock shrouds were reached. Seeing the admiral exposed thus, and liable to fall from a wound that might not be fatal if he could be kept from falling, Captain Drayton sent Quartermaster Knowles up with a piece of a lead-line which was passed around the admiral's body and then made fast to

the shrouds. It was a simple incident, but the people of the nation have rarely been thrilled as they were when the newspapers told how the admiral had gone into battle "lashed to the mast."

And while the admiral stood in the *Hartford's* rigging, Stevens of the *Winnebago* paced the deck between his turrets, unable to endure confinement behind iron walls at such a time, and Perkins of the *Chickasaw* showed the uplift of a daring soul in battle by standing on the top of his forward turret.

Of a similar spirit was Craven of the *Tecumseh*. As he led the way his impatience to get at the *Tennessee*, lying just beyond the line of torpedoes, grew until he said to his pilot:

"It is impossible that the admiral means us to go inside that buoy; I cannot turn my ship."

The admiral had ordered all vessels to pass on the east side of the red buoy to avoid the torpedoes. Craven was arguing with himself, however, rather than the pilot—seeking an excuse for a dash straight at the *Tennessee*—and finding it.

"Hard a starboard," he said, and headed across the torpedoes. But as the bow of the *Tecumseh* touched the black buoys she began to lurch from side to side, puffs of smoke arose around her, her bow dipped down, her stern arose until her screw was seen revolving in the air, and then she sank swiftly from view.

During the brief interval while she rocked on the surface, both Craven and his pilot ran to the ladder leading from the pilot house up to possible safety, but as they met Craven stepped back.

"After you, pilot," he said. The pilot escaped to tell the story, but there was no "after" for Craven.

It was a frightful disaster, and on seeing it the captain of the *Brooklyn* stopped his ship, and then began to back her in a way that threw her broadside to across the chan-

nel. The other ships closed in rapidly, and their fire died away, while the Confederates, seeing the fleet in a tangle, worked their guns with redoubled energy. The supreme moment of the battle and of Farragut's life had come. Instinctively he breathed a prayer—"Shall I go on?"—and then, inspired, he hailed the *Brooklyn:*

"What is the trouble?"

"Torpedoes," replied Captain Alden.

"*Damn the torpedoes!* Full speed, Jouett! Four bells, Captain Drayton!" shouted Farragut. And when the crew of the *Hartford* heard those orders they leaped as one man to the starboard rail, facing the fort, and gave three yells of defiance, while Perkins, of the *Chickasaw,* waved his hat and danced for joy as he saw his admiral lead the way across the torpedo line into the bay.

Farragut's instant decision to go ahead saved the day. The line untangled behind the flagship, and all passed in beyond range of the fort, if not unharmed, yet without receiving material injury.

Nevertheless, while the scales of fortune yet hung quivering—while Farragut was listening to the futile crack of the caps on the torpedoes under his ship, and was looking to see her lifted as the *Tecumseh* had been—he thought of the men he had seen leaping from the *Tecumseh* as she was going down, and ordered a boat to be sent to pick them up. Acting Ensign H. C. Neilds, a mere boy, who was in charge of the boat, noticed after he had pulled away that he had no flag flying. He was in the midst of a storm of shot and bursting shells, but he dropped his tiller ropes, picked the boat flag from its case, shook out the folds, and then stepped it above the stern. The *Tennessee* at that instant had a gun pointed at the boat, but the commanding officer, thrilled by "this most gallant act," elevated the muzzle, and the shot "flew harmless over the heads of that glorious boat's crew."

The *Tennessee* was left behind by the Union ships. She had enough armor to enable her to stay in the battle line, but her builders had not been able to give her enough power to get into the battle line when the Union ships wished to avoid her. The Confederate gunboats were chased away. The *Metacomet* followed the *Selma* into such shoal water that Jouett found his keel in the mud; but instead of turning back he said to First Lieutenant H. J. Sleeper:

"Call in the men from the chains; they are only intimidating me."

One of the gunboats (the *Morgan*) escaped to Mobile. The other was destroyed.

The *Tennessee* was left behind, but she was still in the fight. Buchanan came in pursuit, although with that ship he was like a gladiator crippled in advance of the conflict. When she had arrived in the midst of the deep-water pocket of the bay the whole Union fleet turned upon her—mobbed her. With the *Monongahela* leading, ship after ship rammed her, all in vain. The ships like the *Hartford* fired broadsides at her while touching her side, without a shot piercing the casemate. But her smokestack was cut off close at the deck of the casemate and the lack of draught slowed her engines and filled the casemate with deadly gases. The stearing gear was shot away, leaving her a helpless, floating hulk. Then a 440-pound shot from the *Manhattan* struck the casemate, crushing it in until it was splintered like a basket. Other shots riveted the after port shutters over the ports so that her guns could not be run out. And Perkins placed his *Chickasaw* at her stern and fired shot after shot against one point on the armor until it was seen that he would soon crush in the casemate. Last of all, as Buchanan superintended the work of clearing away one of the after-port shutters, a shot from the *Chickasaw* beat in the casemate so far that the

two mechanics at the side of the admiral were torn to pieces.

"I saw their limbs and chests, severed and mangled, scattered about the deck, their hearts lying near their bodies," wrote Surgeon Conrad when describing the horrors of this combat. At the same time Buchanan's leg was broken by a flying splinter. As he was carried below the bolts that held the armor plate in place were flying. The gunners of the *Tennessee* had shot the Union ships through and through before the guns were put out of commission, but now they could do nothing except stand idle and wait for the shot from the Union ships to enter and kill. Seeing that he was utterly helpless to inflict further injury, Buchanan hauled down his flag. "It had been raised in triumph; it was lowered without dishonor." ("The Battle of Mobile Bay," Foxhall A. Parker, p. 37.)

That night the garrison was driven out of Fort Powell, leaving the way to New Orleans open. The next day, in spite of orders to hold on, Fort Gaines surrendered, because it seemed impossible to accomplish anything by holding out. General Page held on at Fort Morgan, hoping against hope for some turn in the war, until the walls were shot to pieces around him, all but two of his guns were disabled, and his source of supplies was cut off. On August 23 his flag came down.

Speaking of the work of Farragut at Mobile the *Army and Navy Gazette* (British) said:

"There can be no doubt of the signal character of his victory. . . . Already a fleet of transports, laden with fresh provisions and ice has sailed from New York to supply the doughty Admiral, whose feats of arms place him at the head of his profession, and certainly constitute him the first naval officer of the day, as far as actual reputation, won by skill, courage and hard fighting goes."

It was in these words that the British army and navy

men for the first time admitted the possibility of the Union forces winning in the fight. The quotation is memorable for its kindly tone, too. It shows how "skill, courage and hard fighting make friends for a nation as well as for a man."

With the capture of Mobile Bay the aggressive, forward work of the navy almost came to an end. One expedition, that against Fort Fisher, guarding the entrance to Wilmington, N. C., the most famous rendezvous of blockade runners, remained. But it is a tame story.

Preparations for this expedition were begun soon after the capture of Mobile Bay. Farragut was asked to lead it, but he wished to be excused on account of ill health, and Rear-Admiral D. D. Porter took command. A fleet of five ironclads and forty-eight unarmored warships assembled, and 6,500 men, soldiers under General B. F. Butler, were added. The fleet bombarded the fort for two days (December 24 and 25, 1864), and Butler sent 3,000 men ashore to make an assault. The main body of this detachment marched up within 600 yards of the fort and stopped. Some skirmishers captured a flag from the walls and one man killed a Confederate courier in the sally port and brought away the courier's mule. Then Butler decided that the fort could not be taken by assault and, in spite of orders to fortify himself on the island on which the fort stood, he sailed back to the Chesapeake. At Grant's request Butler was relieved by General A. H. Terry and, the navy having held its place in the ocean off the fort, Terry came to capture the work.

Terry landed on the island on January 12, 1865, and found there, in good condition, 700 men, who had been left behind by Butler. The navy had had no difficulty in protecting them. The whole force completed breastworks within two miles of the fort that night. Beginning

next day the navy bombarded the fort for two days, and then Terry decided to make the assault on the 15th. A detachment of 1,400 marines and 600 sailors was landed to assist. The navy men took a position on the beach over against the main (northeast) angle of the fort while the army was placed to attack the inland end of the north line of the work. The bugles sounded the advance, the navy men under Captain K. R. Breeze dashed along the beach and the army charged inland. So well was the army force concealed by shrubbery, etc., and so open was the attack of the navy men that the Confederates thought that the sailors composed the main column of assault. They therefore concentrated all their force against the navy, beating them back with heavy loss, but the army on that account entered with all the more ease.

The capture of Fort Fisher closed the last of the ports through which the Confederates had been able to draw supplies. They were beleaguered on every side and starving. They had begun the war without preparation, and without munitions or any other material of war. They had made from the first, and almost continuously, the mistake of failing to appreciate the necessity of aggressive as distinguished from defensive work. Nevertheless, with magnificent courage and fortitude, and with endless hope, enterprise and persistence, they had struggled on until they were at last overwhelmed by the numbers and resources of the national forces. The secession movement —the rebellion, for so it came to be—was ended forever. It had been a period of indescribable woe and of uncountable losses, but there was left, as the proudest heritage of the new nation, the record of the men who had fought out, man-fashion, the unavoidable conflict.

CHAPTER XXV

BUILDING THE WHITE SQUADRON

For a brief interval at the end of the Civil War the monitors, with their 15-inch Dahlgren guns (some had a rifle each, made of cast-iron with a wrought band shrunk over the breech), made the American navy the most powerful in the world. But political considerations, of which it need be said only that the good of party seemed to be something different from, and of more importance than, the good of the country, led Congress to neglect the navy. The ships that had done good service in the war wore out. Repairs became expensive. To save money it was thought best to build nothing new and let the old ships go to the scrap heap. A secretary of the navy who was ambitious to build made the mistake of constructing ships on the false pretence of making repairs. But what was of greater weight than all else was the fact that, naval ships being just then in a period of transition, it was confidently asserted that it would be good policy to allow European countries "to make the experiments for us." While European nations developed breech-loading rifles, and battleships of vastly greater size and power than our monitors, we did nothing, and within ten years after the Civil War ended the American navy was the standard of inefficiency among the seamen of the world.

It was a period to recall the days before the War of 1812. Since we had no navy a Spanish coast-guard seized an American ship on the high seas, and held her in Cuban ports under guard for ninety-eight days because

the captain of the coast-guard supposed that she might have been carrying arms to Cuban insurgents. The protests of the American Administration were treated with contempt; they were even left unnoticed and unanswered. American citizens found on a ship that belonged to a Cuban filibuster were shot to death without trial, and while the shooting party was at its work (it was at Santiago de Cuba) the American consul at the port was held a prisoner in his office by soldiers who were stationed at his door. This happened within eight years after the end of the Civil War —so rapidly did the respect of foreign nations fall away as our navy was allowed to decay.

We saved a few dollars while other nations were "experimenting for us," but there are those who understand that what we lost in the development of the brains of our mechanics and inventors by letting the other nations "do the experimenting for us" was of infinitely greater value than the whole revenue of the nation. Even that is not all of the evil of the policy then followed. For Congress voted $15,000,000 to prepare the navy for war, after the *Virginius* affair, as the trouble was called, but the money was not used for the purpose. Somebody spent it—nobody knows who, or how, apparently.

On June 29, 1881, eight years after the American citizens were murdered at Santiago de Cuba, the United States for the third time began the work of building a naval fleet. On that day a board, of which Rear-Admiral John Rodgers was the head, was appointed by the Secretary of the Navy to consider the state of the navy, and report what action ought to be taken by Congress. The board recommended the building of twenty-one battleships and seventy cruisers, besides torpedo boats and rams. Of the programme thus proposed Congress built, in due time, one worthless ram. But the subject was before the people, and a host of naval officers who could handle the pen as well as the sword

kept agitation going until the nation saw that the condition of affairs then existing was not only humiliating and destructive of the moral fibre of the people, but it steadily invited aggressions and actual war. In consequence, the nation was finally aroused to a point where Congress provided money for beginning work on two cruisers.

For seventeen years we had allowed foreign countries "to do the experimenting for us." In that time England had learned how to build an *Inflexible*, with armor from 18 to 24 inches thick, and carrying four built-up rifles of 16-inch calibre, firing a projectile of 1,700 pounds weight that exerted a muzzle energy of 27,213 foot-tons and was able to pierce 27.5 inches of wrought-iron armor at a range of 500 yards. Our best naval ship was a monitor carrying smoothbore guns that fired a shell having a muzzle energy of 7,997 foot-tons—something as little able to penetrate the armor of the day as a flint-lock musket would have been. The *Inflexible* could fight on water rough enough to compel the monitor to close all ports, and she could steam almost twice as fast as the monitor.

We had a complete book knowledge of the best of the British ships, and now we were to begin using the advantages we had gained by allowing other nations "to do the experimenting for us."

The Secretary of the Navy appointed officers to plan and build the ships that Congress had authorized, but when they got together they found that the only facilities that the country afforded for their work included draughting boards, pencils, pens and India ink. There was not a shipyard in the country adapted to the construction of a 5,000-ton cruiser, not to mention an armor-clad. There was not a mill in the country that could make the steel plates and frames required, let alone armor. There was not a hammer in the country that could make a forging for the smallest rifle needed. Instead of building a 5,000-ton

cruiser fit to meet anything of the kind afloat, we began perforce by building a despatch boat and two little 3,000-ton cruisers, and we could not do even that much until facilities for making steel plates had been provided. We had to do some experimenting for ourselves. We could not serve an apprenticeship by proxy.

In 1884 the Secretary of the Navy, William C. Whitney, having no confidence in the ability of our own naval architects, sent to England for plans for further shipbuilding that had been authorized by Congress. Plans for the *Texas*, the *Charleston* and the *Baltimore* were thus obtained. The English designers in every case sold him gold-bricks, so to speak—plans that were defective—and it was only after many alterations that ships fit for duty were provided. The error of buying plans abroad was a continuation of the error of allowing other nations to do the experimenting for us. The people who made the error failed to see that what the nation needed first of all was men able to build ships, not merely as good as those of Europe, but ships with enough new ideas in them to make them the best afloat, as the *Constitution* was in her class.

Nevertheless, this Secretary of the Navy did one thing that atoned for all errors. By skilful handling of the appropriations he accumulated a fund wherewith he was able to induce a steel-making company to erect a plant for the production of armor and the forgings for high-power guns.

By the contract signed with John Roach, on July 23, 1883, for the building of the despatch boat *Dolphin*, the 3,000-ton *Atlanta* and *Boston*, the mills for the making of such steel plates as were needed for ship hulls were guaranteed. By the contract of June 1, 1887, with the Bethlehem Iron Company, facilities for making the best of steel armor and forgings for the largest of steel guns were provided.

For the battle of Lake Champlain Macdonough built a very good ship in thirty days. During the Civil War we built some good fighting machines of that period in ninety days. But between June 29, 1881, and June 1, 1887, it was demonstrated that we had to build steel mills before we could build modern battleships, and it was thereafter demonstrated that even with the best of facilities it was not possible to build a battleship in less than a year, though the work was driven at the highest practicable speed.

The steel-making establishments that were founded on these naval contracts are worth a paragraph more for the reason that the present (1907) enormous steel industry of the United States was thus begun and made possible. The important fact in a business point of view is that the money for shipbuilding was spent in such a way that useful *producing* industry was promoted. Further than that shipyards able to produce the best fighting machines in the world were built. We may hope a time will come when the steel industry and the shipbuilding industry will combine to produce a merchant marine, but in the meantime the battleship has been so far developed that a nation's fighting strength is calculated by its facilities for turning out such ships rather than by the actual guns afloat; and in its ability to build battleships the United States is the second Power of the world.

Great as have been the advantages obtained through this use of the nation's revenues for the simultaneous promotion of the nation's industries and the increase of the nation's influence, these benefits are of minor importance when compared with one yet to be considered. Says Roberts, the well-known writer on agricultural topics, in his "Fertility of the Land": "If the introduction of the reaping machine had been of no value in the farm economy, the invention would still have been worth the while

because of the mental uplift which it gives the farmer's boy who learns how to manage it."

If our battleships were of no advantage in increasing the influence of the nation in its efforts to preserve the peace of the world, their development and construction would still have been worth the while because of the mental uplift they give those who learn to handle them, and who learn to build them. For the battleship is the most splendid machine the world ever saw.

It is also to the credit of Secretary of the Navy Whitney that he caused a factory for making the smaller cannon, such as 6-pounders, to be established in this country. The Hotchkiss guns were an American invention, although the inventor had to go to Europe to secure recognition. When we began to build a navy Whitney would give the contract for the smaller guns only on the condition that they be made in this country.

We began our new navy with a despatch boat and two small cruisers. Our first armored ship worth mention was the lamented *Maine*. She carried side armor twelve inches thick, and she had two 10-inch guns in each turret. Her keel was laid on October 17, 1888, and she was launched on November 18, 1890. Up to that date we were experimenting for ourselves, and we had learned how to do the work. The time had then come when we were ready to begin to set a pace in the design and construction of fighting ships for the world to consider. On August 28, 1890, the contract for the construction of the armored cruiser *New York* was signed. She was launched December 2, 1891. She was 380.5 feet long by 65 wide, and she displaced 8,200 tons. Under the contract the speed was to be twenty knots an hour, but a premium was allowed for any excess of speed. On May 22, 1892, she was at sea for her official trial, and if we consider the effect of that trial upon the navy and the nation we shall find few other days

to compare with it. For, because of the pessimistic habit of thought cultivated during the dark ages of the navy, even the officers who were to test her had not full confidence that she would make good the record for which she was designed. But when with eager eyes they watched the swift beating of connecting rods and the smooth whirr of shafts, and in the midst of the perspiring heat of the air they found the bearings cool, while the indicator cards showed such power as they had never seen before, their fears faded away. For four hours they kept their eyes on engine-room and taffrail log and clock, and then when the time was done the whole crew burst into cheers, while a sailor climbed aloft and lashed a broom to the mast-head. She had covered twenty-one sea miles an hour. No such ship as that had ever floated the "gridiron flag"; no such a ship of the class floated any flag. The shame that for twenty-five years had rested on our navy was wiped out. The *New York* was the *Constitution* of the new navy we affectionately called the White Squadron.

And yet, without retracting what has been said in praise of the *New York*, it must be noted that even for her day she was not a good warship. She was inspiring to the people chiefly because she broke the record for speed. She was to be a commerce destroyer. People then thought that the way to win in war was to destroy the enemy's commerce. If the truth be told, most Americans of the *New York's* day thought first of England when the possibility of a war was mentioned. The *New York* was swift enough to catch the British merchantman and escape the British cruiser, but in a battle she would have found the British cruiser armed with 6-inch broadside guns; she carried 4-inch only. While a threat of destroying its commerce might (and it has) make a nation hesitate about embarking in a war it is seen very clearly now that commerce destruction does not end a war after hostilities have been begun.

And then came the battleship era. We tried our 'prentice hands (1886) on the *Maine* and the *Texas*, two vessels of a little more than 6,000 tons displacement. By the act of June 30, 1890, Congress provided for three real battleships—"coast defence," of course. It is said that when the bill had been signed, Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy sent for Lewis Nixon, then in the Constructor's Bureau, and said to him informally:

"Now, sir, what you've to do is to design a ship that can lick anything afloat."

And Nixon designed the *Oregon*. Two 13-inch guns, the most powerful then made, were put in each of two main turrets located over the keel at bow and stern. Two turrets were then located over each rail, and in each of them two 8-inch guns were mounted. Along the side armor walls were placed four 6-inch guns. The ship displaced nearly 10,300 tons and the speed attained was 15.547 knots. The armor varied from fifteen to eighteen inches in thickness.

The *Oregon* and her class are out of date now, though that is due chiefly to the fact that the designer was hampered by the ancient idea that when we go to war we must invite the enemy to come to our harbors and coasts to do the fighting—it was imperative that these battleships should be for "coast defence." They have but a small coal capacity, nevertheless in their day, if able to get into the battle line, there was no ship afloat equal to them.

The report of the Secretary of the Navy, John D. Long, dated November 15, 1897, a few months before the war with Spain was begun, said:

"The present effective fighting force of the navy consists of four battleships of the first class, two battleships of the second class, two armored cruisers, sixteen cruisers, fifteen gunboats, six double turreted monitors, one ram,

one dynamite gunboat, one despatch boat, one transport steamer and five torpedo boats. There are under construction five battleships of the first class, sixteen torpedo boats and one submarine boat."

Mention was then made of "sixty-four other naval vessels"—such as "tugs, disused single-turreted monitors and some unserviceable craft," together with an "auxiliary fleet" of "twenty subsidized steamers" that might be of some use. He thought the country was to be "congratulated upon the results obtained in the rebuilding of the navy."

The *Oregon*, *Massachusetts*, *Indiana* and *Iowa* were the four battleships. The *New York* and *Brooklyn* were the two armored cruisers, the *Brooklyn* being a greater *New York*. Where the *New York* carried six 8-inch and twelve 4-inch guns, the *Brooklyn* carried eight 8-inch guns and twelve 5-inch. The *Olympia* was the best of the so-called protected cruisers. She carried no vertical armor, but a "protective deck," $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches thick on the sloping walls and two inches thick on the flat, was laid to protect the machinery and magazines. She was armed with four 8-inch guns in two turrets, and ten 5-inch in broadside, besides the usual 6-pounder and 1-pounder small guns. The *Puritan* was the best of the harbor-defence monitors. She was commissioned on December 10, 1896. She carried four 12-inch and six 4-inch guns.

The torpedo boats should have special mention, perhaps, because they were most excellent little ships of their class. The *Porter* was the largest in commission. She was 175 feet long, 17 wide and drew 5.5 feet of water when in fighting trim. She had made 28.63 knots, and she was armed with three tubes for firing torpedoes, and four 1-pounder guns. The ram was worthless, as was the dynamite cruiser. The torpedo might have been called a cigar-shaped, automobile boat driven by compressed air

Six-inch cast-iron gun, breech reënforced by extra thickness only.

Projectile for a modern six-inch gun, weight, 100 pounds, powder, 50 pounds.

Six-inch cast-iron rifle, breech reënforced by wrought jacket sweated on.

Projectile for an old-time six-inch smooth-bore, weight, 32 pounds.

Modern six-inch rifle showing extra reënforcements.

The Evolution of the Six-inch Gun.

(Relative proportions are shown by the diagrams.)

and carrying a charge of gun cotton in the head which could be fired by contact—percussion.

Of the evolution of the gun it should be said that when, in 1883, we began a little experimenting for ourselves the European powers were building rifled guns which were composed of wrought steel tubes placed sleeve-fashion, one within the other and so designed that they could be loaded at the breech. We had plans of such guns, but our ships were armed with smoothbore Dahlgrens, though an attempt to improve on these had been made by converting them into rifles. A rifled steel tube was forced into the cast-iron smoothbore. There was but one more foolish waste of the money of the people and that one was made when new ships were started under the pretence of repairing old ones. With the building of the new ships we also built guns on plans adapted from plans obtained from Europe. These were of wrought steel tubes and breech-loaders. The largest of these guns weighed 60 tons. It was 40 feet long over all, the bore was 13 inches in diameter by 454.5 inches deep (or long), and the wrought steel projectile weighed 1,100 pounds. A charge of 550 pounds of brown powder hurled this shot at a muzzle velocity of 2,100 feet per second. The muzzle energy of the shot was 33,625 foot tons. It could perforate 33.5 inches of wrought iron at the muzzle The 12-inch gun, which has since become the standard size for large guns, weighed 45.2 tons, it was 36.8 feet long over all, the projectile weighed 850 pounds, and this, with a charge of 425 pounds of brown powder, was calculated to attain a velocity of 2,100 feet per second and to pierce thirty inches of wrought iron at the muzzle of the gun. When we went to war with Spain, England had a very good smokeless powder and she had built longer and more powerful guns than any in the American navy. Thus the muzzle velocity of their 6-inch projectile was 2,642 feet per second, while the

American projectile reached 2,150. As gun builders we were yet serving an apprenticeship, even if a few of our ships had, at the time they were designed, broken the record.

CHAPTER XXVI

BEGINNING THE WAR WITH SPAIN

Ill feeling had prevailed between the United States and Spain, off and on, for just a century before war came, and the old matters, though closed in a diplomatic point of view, had created an antipathy between the two peoples that was particularly well defined among the Spaniards. We had flattered ourselves that our patience and long-suffering under aggression and outrage (as when American citizens were shot to death without trial at Santiago) had been highly praiseworthy. In a civilized point of view we were in the right, very likely, but the aggressors supposed that we endured outrage because we were unwilling to spend dollars, and they had our attitude toward a navy, while the foreigners were doing the experimenting for us, to justify that view. The Spaniards were not the only Europeans, either, who believed that we would sacrifice honor rather than spend money in resenting aggression, and the influence of this contemptuous feeling in bringing on a war is a matter worthy of the most serious consideration. The fact that the Spaniards commonly spoke of the Americans, just before the war, as pigs, is memorable as an admonition.

The immediate cause of the war was the Cuban struggle for liberty. The first serious struggle of the Cubans, known as the "Ten Years' War," came to an end in 1878 because of the utter exhaustion of the combatants, an exhaustion due to their brutal "disregard of the laws of civilized warfare and of the just demands of humanity."

Nevertheless, when in 1895 the island had in a measure recovered, the insurrection broke out afresh with the pitiless rigor of the former war emphasized. The Spaniards deliberately determined to conquer the revolt by the exhaustion of the physical resources of the island and the extermination of its inhabitants. An armed force of 250,000 men was sent to Cuba. The principal towns were garrisoned. Blockhouses were built along the railroads. Two lines of tiny forts connected by barbed wire entanglements (*trochas*) were constructed across the island. It was proclaimed that whoever failed to assist in putting down the insurrection was to be considered as an armed enemy, and the rural populace was gathered into the garrisoned towns and there held in idleness, with the deliberate intention that they should perish of want and disease. Senator Foraker, of Ohio, after an investigation, reported (*Forum*, June, 1898) that more than 200,000 had died thus within a year before the war.

The foreign trade of the island was ruined, and the Americans were the chief losers. The Americans domiciled in Cuba lost their investments amounting to many millions. The Cubans who resided in the United States by fitting out filibustering expeditions compelled our Government to use our naval ships as well as the revenue marine for the protection of Spanish treaty rights. The financial injury to the American people through the misrule of Spain in Cuba is beyond computation, but it is to be remembered that when President Cleveland, in 1895, and President McKinley, in 1897, offered the good offices of our Government for the ending of the insurrection, the offer was made first of all on the grounds of humanity. Our people rose above "interest." Of course our offers were rejected.

An English author, in speaking of the Spaniards in Cuba, said: "There must be a stage in misgovernment

which will justify the interference of bystanding nations." This stage arrived when the Spaniards adopted starvation as a weapon of war. On September 18, 1897, Stewart L. Woodford, American Minister to Spain, said in diplomatic language to the Spanish Government: "You must improve conditions in Cuba or we will do it for you." A few days later the Spanish announced an autonomist government on the island, but the effort to carry out this reform, if sincerely made, was unsuccessful. The Cubans rejected it with scorn while the Spaniards in Cuba were angered beyond all precedent because the Americans had forced this measure. The Havana newspapers were filled with virulent attacks upon the American people, while cartoons, usually vulgar, and in all cases adapted to inflame the populace against all things American, were spread broadcast among those who could not read.

The animosity toward Americans having increased to a point where mob attacks were to be expected the second-rate battleship *Maine*, Captain C. D. Sigsbee, was ordered to Key West, ninety miles from Havana, where she was held in readiness to run across and afford asylum to any Americans in peril. The expected outbreak came on January 12, 1898, but because it was not particularly dangerous the *Maine* did not arrive at Havana until Tuesday, the 25th.

The presence of the *Maine*, however, was anything but quieting, as was shown by a circular thrust into the hands of Captain Sigsbee as he was crossing the bay on a ferry-boat the next Sunday. Among other things the circular had the following:

> And finally these Yankee pigs who meddle in our affairs, humiliating us to the last degree, and for a still greater taunt order to us a man-of-war of their *rotten squadron*. . . . Spaniards! The moment of action has arrived. Do not go to sleep. Let us teach these vile traitors that we have not yet lost our pride, and that we

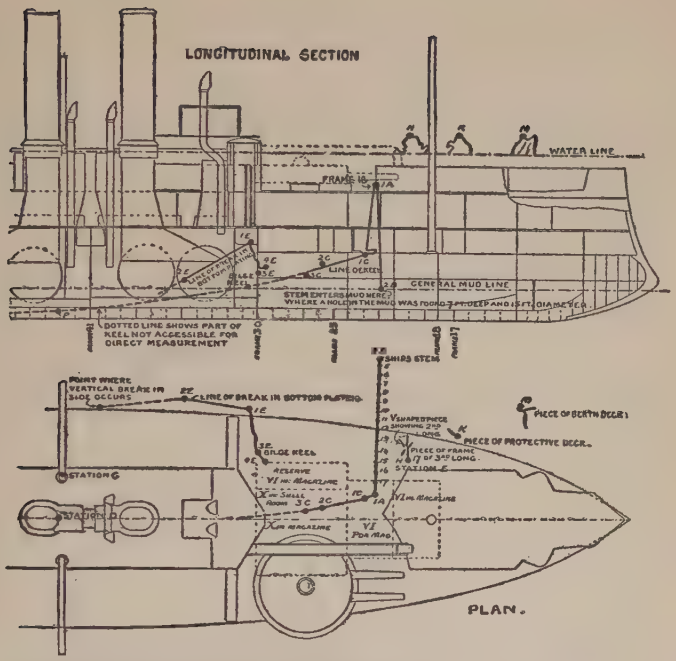
know how to protest with the energy befitting a nation worthy and strong as our Spain is, and always will be! Death to the Americans!

In the meantime the *Maine* had been moored, by order of the Captain of the Port, to a specially located buoy, and there at 9:40 o'clock at night, on February 15, 1898, she was blown up. Of her crew 266 were killed outright, while one more died later from the effects of the shock then received.

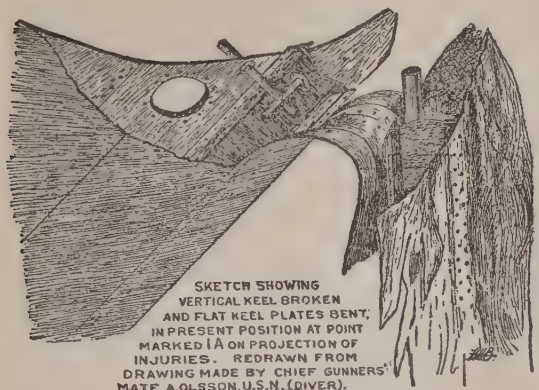
A naval court of inquiry was ordered by the Navy Department. Captain W. T. Sampson (president), Captain F. E. Chadwick and Lieutenant-Commander W. E. Potter constituted the court, with Lieutenant-Commander Adolph Marix as judge advocate. These officers were selected because none more worthy of the confidence of the country and the civilized world could be found. The "Spanish officers sought to throw obstacles in the way of our independent inquiry," but "a sharp protest ended this procedure." (Long, "The New American Navy," vol. I, p. 143).

The examination of the wreck by both civilian and naval divers showed that "the outer shell of the ship," and that is to say the bottom plating, "at a point eleven feet six inches from the middle line of the ship" had been "forced up so as to be now about four feet above the surface of the water." The keel had been broken and the broken parts forced up until they were within six feet of the surface. On consideration of these facts the court was compelled to find that "this effect could have been produced only by the explosion of a mine situated under the bottom of the ship."

It was at that time suggested that the Cubans might have placed and exploded the mine for the sake of inciting the Americans to make war, on the supposition that the Spaniards did it. But the harbor was at that time especially well guarded by the Spanish officers and patrol.


LONGITUDINAL SECTION
WATER LINE
FRAME 18
LINE OF KEEL
GENERAL MUD LINE
STEM ENTERED MUD HERE
WHERE A HOLE IN THE MUD WAS FOUND 7 FT DEEP AND 15 FT. DIAMETER
DOTTED LINE SHOWS PART OF KEEL NOT ACCESSIBLE FOR DIRECT MEASUREMENT
SHIPS STEM
POINT WHERE VERTICAL BREAK IN SHOE OCCURS
LINE OF BREAK IN BOTTOM PLATING
PIECE OF BERTH DECK
PIECE OF PROTECTIVE DECK
PIECE OF FRAME No 17 OF 3½" IRON
STATION 6
STATION 5
BILGE KEEL
RESERVE
VI fm MAGAZINE
VI POWDER
PLAN.

Diagrams Showing in the Heavy Lines the Position of the Keel and Bow of the "Maine" after the Explosion.


SKETCH SHOWING VERTICAL KEEL BROKEN AND FLAT KEEL PLATES BENT, IN PRESENT POSITION AT POINT MARKED 1A ON PROJECTION OF INJURIES. REDRAWN FROM DRAWING MADE BY CHIEF GUNNERS' MATE A. OLSSON, U.S.N. (DIVER).

Sketch Showing Broken Keel at Point Marked 1A in the Above Plan.

(Both drawings reproduced from the Official Report.)

An examination of the locality is sufficient, in connection with the evidence made public, to convince any candid investigator that such a mine as that could have been placed and exploded only with the aid of the Spanish officials of some rank. In fact, if the deed had been committed by any other persons than Spaniards of rank the detailed story would have been told long ago.

Great as was the impression made upon the American people by this slaughter it should be noted that it did not cause the war. Preparations for the inevitable conflict—a conflict made inevitable by conditions in Cuba—were already well in hand long before the *Maine* went to Havana. On January 11 the commanders of the various squadrons were ordered to retain in the service any men whose terms of enlistment might be expiring. The South American squadron was ordered north from Montevideo. Vessels *en route* to foreign parts were intercepted and ordered home. Lieutenant G. L. Dyer, naval attaché at Madrid, had been gathering all possible information about the Spanish navy. Commodore George Dewey was selected for the command of the Asiatic squadron (October 21, 1897), and he had been diligent in securing information about the Spanish fleet at Manila. The Secretary of the Navy had exhausted his powers in preparing his ships for service and especially in securing adequate supplies.

Of course the destruction of the *Maine* somewhat hastened matters. A full supply of ammunition for Dewey's fleet was forwarded to Honolulu, where the *Baltimore* took it and then steamed away to Hongkong. There she arrived, happily, in time for an overhauling in the dry-dock. The battleship *Oregon* was started on her long journey from San Francisco to Key West on March 19.

In the meantime (March 9) Congress appropriated $50,000,000 for the "national defence" and $25,000,000 was added later to this sum. Efforts were then made to

buy warships and we secured one that we were able to get into actual service—the *New Orleans*, formerly the *Amazonas*, of Brazil. A few others were secured, but not in time to be of service worth mention. We learned that when war was actually at hand we had to depend on what we had provided in advance for such an emergency.

We secured some merchantmen—ninety-seven in all. "Some American owners displayed far more greed than patriotism," says Secretary Long, and in "two instances there was rank extortion." Of these ships we made shoddy warships, in some cases, and in others colliers and despatch boats. One ship was fitted as a hospital and another as a floating machine shop. Thus, before the actual need came, the Department was able to report "ready." The country ought to remember Secretary Long, Assistant Secretary Roosevelt and the many naval officers who did this work.

In laying out the work of the navy an attack upon the ports of Spain was considered and abandoned because of the unfriendly attitude of European Powers and because, too, the end could be accomplished perhaps better by making the fight on the coast of Cuba where the Spanish navy would be operating 3,000 miles from home. The American ships were therefore assembled, as far as possible, at Key West. All would have gathered there but for the disgraceful cowardice of people of political influence in the coast cities. So many of these demanded protection that a coastguard squadron which included one of the swiftest of our cruisers had to be detailed for patrol duty along shore. In addition a stronger squadron was located in the Chesapeake. However, a sufficient but most heterogeneous fleet was found at Key West when the day of war came. There was the *Indiana* with armor eighteen inches thick, and gunboats like the *Nashville* with no armor at all. There was the *New York* with her 4-inch

broadside guns and a speed of twenty knots and the monitors with 12-inch guns and a speed of from six to eight knots. We had built a navy for "coast defence" and when the time to use it came we found that we had to seek the enemy on his own coasts, and do it with armored ships having a coal-bunker capacity of from 236 to 410 tons only.

Still, as said, the navy was ready when on April 9 Consul General Lee left Havana. On the 11th the President sent a message to Congress, setting forth the situation. On the 18th Congress resolved that "the people of Cuba are and of right ought to be free," and directed the President to use our entire land and naval forces to make them free. The vote in the House was 310 to 6.

This act was signed by the President on April 20. The Spanish Minister left Washington that night. The next day Minister Woodford left Madrid, and then at sunrise on April 22, 1898, the American fleet steamed away from Key West, under Rear-Admiral Sampson, who had been promoted for the work in hand. It was bound for the coast of Cuba, where a blockade was to be established from Cardenas to Bahia Honda on the north coast, and at Cienfuegos on the south coast. The whole island was not blockaded because (according to Secretary Long) the navy did not have enough ships to do more than was done. Torpedo boats and lighthouse tenders were necessarily utilized in order to make the blockade effective.

As the fleet steamed away a merchantman was seen approaching from the west loaded with lumber. A little later this vessel displayed her flag and as it was spread to the breeze a lookout on the *New York* reported that it was Spanish. The *Nashville*, Captain W. Maynard, was ordered in chase. Turning out of her place in line she headed for the ship and then gunner Patrick Malia, at 7:02 o'clock, fired the first shot of the war by sending a

shot across her bows. She was the inappropriately named merchantman *Buenaventura,* of Bilboa, bound from Pascagoula to Rotterdam. She was condemned as a good prize and eventually became a coal barge on the American coast.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE BATTLE OF MANILA

It was a fortunate thing for the United States that when the first gun of the War with Spain was fired off Key West, on April 22, 1898, no formal declaration of war had been made on either side. For while Admiral Sampson was directing the capture of the *Buenaventura* the cruiser *Baltimore* was just steaming into Hong Kong after her long run from Honolulu with ammunition for Dewey, and she was short of coal and needed cleaning in the drydock. Until war had been officially declared the British at Hong Kong were under no obligations as neutrals, and the *Baltimore* was free to get everything she needed. Immediately on arrival she was docked and at the end of forty-eight hours she came forth ready.

It was then—on April 24—that the Spanish officially proclaimed that war existed and British neutrality was announced. At the same time Dewey received an order from Washington which said:

"Proceed at once to the Philippines. Commence operations at once, particularly against the Spanish fleet. You must capture vessels or destroy."

International law allowed Dewey a day of grace in port for such further preparation as was needed, and on the 25th he sailed away with the bands on the British ships playing the "Star Spangled Banner" and the British crews cheering. The captain of the *Immortalité* shouted as the ships passed out:

"You will surely win."

Commodore Dewey's fleet consisted of the *Olympia* (flagship), Captain C. V. Gridley; the *Baltimore*, Captain N. M. Dyer; the *Raleigh*, Captain J. B. Coghlan; the *Boston* (one of the first ships built for the White Squadron), Captain F. Wildes; the *Concord*, Captain A. Walker, and the *Petrel*, Captain E. P. Wood. The revenue cutter *McCulloch*, Captain D. B. Hodgson, R.M., was assigned to the fleet as a despatch boat, and two transports had been purchased and loaded with supplies sufficient to last the fleet six months. The fighting ships mounted all told fifty three guns, 5-inch, 6-inch, and 8-inch rifles. Of small guns—6-pounders and smaller—there were eighty-four. Four of the ships were classed as cruisers and three as gunboats.

The Spanish fleet at Manila included two cruisers, eleven gunboats and twenty-five "mosquito" gunboats, but Admiral Montojo, commanding, could place in the battle-line no more than eleven of the largest of the vessels, and they together mounted only forty-four guns, of which the smallest was of 3.5 inches and the largest 6.2 inches calibre. More than half of the main battery guns were 4.7-inch calibre. Of small guns the Spaniards mounted eighty-one. It is manifest that afloat the Spanish force was vastly inferior. But Admiral Montojo had placed his fleet at the Cavite arsenal, located on Cavite Bay, an indentation on the south side of Manila Bay, and this bay was guarded by two 6.2-inch guns and three 6.3-inch guns placed in forts of which the one on Sangley Point was a modern casemate. Moreover, Manila city was guarded by four 9.5-inch guns and four 5.5-inch besides fifteen old-style rifles of 6.3-inch calibre. On islands at the entrance of the bay were seventeen rifles of modern build and varying in size from 4.7-inches to 7 inches in calibre.

To reach the Spanish fleet at Cavite it was necessary that Dewey should pass within easy range of nearly all

of the guns at the entrance of the bay, where they were located well for a plunging fire; and when within the bay he would have to fight, as he knew very well, not only the Spanish fleet but the Spanish forts both at Cavite and Manila city.

On leaving Hong Kong the American fleet made Mirs Bay a rendezvous until the 27th when they sailed and at dawn on the 30th they arrived within sight of Luzon, the island on which Manila stands. That day was passed in searching the coast for the Spanish fleet as far as Subig Bay, for the coast affords a number of nautical-ambush localities, but nothing was found, and at midnight the *Olympia* led the way past the forts guarding the entrance to Manila Bay. Flames from a smokestack revealed the fleet to the sentinels on shore, but only one shot was fired from the forts.

The dawn of Sunday, May 1, 1898, found the American fleet lying about seven miles west from Manila city and perhaps as far northwest from the Cavite forts where the Spanish ships were at anchor. The crews had passed the night at their guns. A haze on the water was so thick that the Spanish ships could not be seen, but as soon as it was light enough for navigation the fleet, with the *Olympia* in the lead, was headed in toward Manila and then around in a curve to pass within range of the Spanish fleet. At 5:15 o'clock a gun, mounted at Manila, opened fire, and as the signal "Fire as convenient" was flying on the *Olympia*, the captain of the *Concord* sent two shells at the Manila fort. Thereafter the fleet steamed on, with the gunners grinning like prize fighters, until the *Olympia* was 5,600 yards from the Spanish ships, which could then be seen anchored across Cavite Bay. Then Dewey turned to Captain Gridley and said quietly:

"You may fire when you are ready, Gridley."

The 8-inch guns in the forward turret were discharged

immediately. It was then exactly 5:35 o'clock. The speed of the fleet was now reduced and with their port batteries working vigorously the ships passed in front of the Spanish fleet and the forts. Two submarine mines were exploded in front of the *Olympia* at a distance of a thousand yards or so, but because the distance from the flagship was so great they only gave confidence to the American commanders. The fire of the Spanish had been rapid but as little harmful as the explosion of the torpedoes, and when Dewey drew out of range to westward he turned inshore and came back so as to pass much closer to the enemy.

It had been manifest to the Spaniards from the first that their fire was ineffective, and when the American ships turned back Admiral Montojo slipped the cable of his flagship, the *Reina Christina,* and steamed out to reduce the range. Here, if ever, was uncircumspect gallantry, for the guns of the whole American fleet were at once concentrated on the venturesome Spaniard, and she was riddled from stem to stern. Her sides were beaten in, her men were swept away from their guns and she was set afire in so many places that flames burst up from every hatch, while puffs of steam followed, showing that steam connections had been cut. In haste she was turned back toward the shelter of the harbor forts, and then an 8-inch shell from the *Olympia* raked her from aft forward, the whole length of her gun deck. As she arrived within the bay her crew were seen leaping overboard from both sides, while boats came hurriedly from the other ships to rescue those who could not swim. Of 493 men on board when she began the battle only seventy escaped unhurt.

While his flagship was destroyed Admiral Montojo was yet unbeaten. Crossing to the *Isla de Cuba,* as Perry crossed from the *Lawrence* to the *Niagara,* during the battle of Lake Erie, Montojo spread his flag once more and fought on.

In the meantime two torpedo boats made a dash at the American fleet, but the small-gun men picked them up and within a few minutes sank one of them and drove the other, crippled, to the beach, where it was found afterwards broken and bloody.

Three times the American ships circled in front of the enemy, and then at 7:35, "being erroneously informed that the 5-inch battery was short of ammunition" (Long), Dewey ordered the fleet out of action. When out of range all hands were sent to breakfast.

At 10:45, when the men had been well rested (some of them stretched out on deck and had a comforting sleep), the fleet once more went in search of the Spaniards. The Spanish flagship was now under water, while all the other ships except one were well within Cavite Bay, where they had either been set on fire, or were sinking, because the seacocks had been opened. The *Antonio de Ulloa* was still in the fight. Her captain nailed her flag to the mast and fought until she sank with her guns sissing hot as the water reached them.

The American gunners then gave special attention to the Spanish forts. The little *Petrel*, by going into Cavite Bay, where she could take the enemy in the rear and at short range, was named the "Baby Battleship" by the enthusiastic sailors of the other ships. The fire proved so hot that the garrisons were unable to endure it. At 12:20 o'clock the white flag was displayed and the *Petrel* signalled "The enemy has surrendered."

Three of the Spanish ships were sunk by the fire of the American ships and eight were set on fire and scuttled by their own crews after it was seen that there was no hope. In the forts and ships together there were 381 men killed. In the American fleet seven men were wounded somewhat and none were killed. No shot from the forts hit any ship. Though several shot from the

Spanish ships struck home, no damage of moment was inflicted.

Of the results of the battle it must be said first that the destruction of the Spanish ships ended the Spanish power on the Pacific. American commerce was thereafter as free as before the war began. A Spanish fleet was ordered from home waters toward the Philippines; it was probably only a threat, but even if it was really bound for a contest with Dewey, it never got beyond the Suez Canal. It left the Spanish coast without ships and the prospect of an American raid across the Atlantic turned it back.

The thoroughness with which Dewey did his work, it should be said, was a notice to the unfriendly Powers of Europe that American sailors could and would fight just as well as they had fought in the Civil War and the War of 1812, and that notice, we may suppose, confirmed the new-born British faith in Tattnall's celebrated expression, "Blood is thicker than water." The desire to be on friendly terms with a first-class fighting man is entirely natural.

It was seen at last, that in defending American rights it had been necessary to fight a battle in far waters—in a part of the world where the much-vaunted strategic value of "the broad Atlantic" was of no avail.

Finally, though the lesson has not been well learned yet, the victory, gained by the gun-fire of unarmored ships, confirmed the words of Farragut when he said that "the best protection against the enemy's fire is a well-directed fire from our own guns."

CHAPTER XXVIII

ON TO SANTIAGO

On the approach of war Spain divided her home fleet into two squadrons, one of which was ordered first to the Canaries, to which the Americans were expected to send a squadron, and then to the Cape de Verdes. This squadron was composed of the *Maria Teresa*, the *Vizcaya*, the *Oquendo*, and the *Cristobal Colon*, with the torpedo destroyers *Furor*, *Terror* and *Pluton*. The *Teresa*, *Vizcaya* and *Oquendo* carried armor that was twelve inches thick, with a three-inch inclined deck within the belt, and each was armed with two 11-inch guns in turrets and ten 5.5-inch guns in broadside, besides smaller guns. They were credited with a speed of twenty knots. The *Colon* had the same speed as the others. Her armor belt was six inches thick, and she was supposed to be armed with two 10-inch, ten 6-inch and six 4.7-inch guns, but her largest guns had never been mounted. As the torpedo destroyers were also formidable and able to cross the sea, this squadron engaged the serious attention of the Washington strategists from the first, and when, on April 29, it left the Cape de Verdes with destination unknown, the "Navy Department floundered in a sea of ignorance." (Long.)

Because some of the things done thereafter during this campaign became the subject of a heated controversy that raged throughout the country, creating settled prejudices and bringing unmerited reproach upon many naval officers of superior ability and personal character, it seems

necessary to say here that every material statement to be found herein has been gathered from the "Record of Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry in the Case of Rear-Admiral Winfield S. Schley" (a court held in 1901, at Schley's request), from Schley's "Forty-five Years Under the Flag," and from the official reports in the "Appendix to the Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation for 1898." No campaign was ever before described as that of Santiago was, and all interested can rest assured that when all prejudices have been lost the historians of the future will do exact justice to everyone who was engaged in the work. The members of the court were: Admiral George Dewey, Rear-Admiral A. E. K. Benham and Rear-Admiral F. M. Ramsey, with Captain S. C. Lemly Judge Advocate General. From the immense mass of material thus provided have been gathered the following facts:

Admiral Cervera, commanding the Spanish squadron from the Cape de Verdes, appeared off Martinique on May 11, the day when Sampson, with a heterogeneous squadron, was bombarding San Juan, Porto Rico, whither he had gone in search of the Spaniards. The news of the arrival of the Spanish was held up by the French for thirty-six hours. When Washington heard the news Sampson was ordered back to Key West. The Flying Squadron, (that in the Chesapeake) was ordered south, and scouts were sent to patrol certain channels through which Cervera would have to go if he were to make a run to Havana. All but the smallest of the blockaders off Cienfuegos were ordered away.

The Department knew that Cervera would need coal, and that his machinery would need overhauling. There were only four Spanish ports in the West Indies where he could be accommodated—Havana, Cienfuegos and Santiago, Cuba, and San Juan, Porto Rico. No effort was made to keep unbroken watch off either Santiago or San

Juan until after it was rumored that Cervera was in Santiago.

From Martinique Cervera went to Curaçoa to coal. When he was about to leave Curaçoa on May 15 the fact was telegraphed promptly to Washington and then to Sampson, who was on his way to Key West from San Juan. Sampson placed his ships in the Bahama Channel, where they could intercept Cervera if a dash for Havana were made by way of the east end of Cuba, and after putting Captain R. D. Evans in charge, he continued on, under his orders from Washington, to Key West, where he arrived May 18. The Flying Squadron was already there. Sampson chose to guard the north shore of Cuba, and sent Commodore Schley, commanding the Flying Squadron, to Cienfuegos. The order said "Proceed with despatch (utmost) off Cienfuegos." It had been learned, on authority supposed to be trustworthy, that Cervera had supplies for Havana, and it was believed that he would try to reach Cienfuegos, from whence a railroad led to Havana. A scout was now sent to San Juan, but none to Santiago.

"Early on the morning of the 19th" (Schley's "Forty-five Years Under the Flag," p. 262) another order, sent to Schley from Sampson, said: "You should establish a blockade at Cienfuegos with the least possible delay." In obedience to this order the "Flying Squadron, consisting of the *Brooklyn*, *Massachusetts*, *Texas* and *Scorpion*, sailed from Key West between 7 and 8 A. M., May 19, for Cienfuegos *via* the Yucatan Channel. . . . At daylight on the 22d position was taken off Cienfuegos, near the entrance, and the port was thus blockaded." (Schley, pp. 263, 265.) The route had been covered in a little less than three days. The *Iowa*, Captain R. D. Evans, followed, leaving Key West on the 20th, going by way of the blockading station off Havana (a longer route), and arrived after two days and two hours.

A converted yacht, which Schley met on the way, sent word, saying "No news of the Spaniards." When forty miles from Cienfuegos "a number of guns were heard, apparently with the cadence of a salute." (Schley.) Schley, therefore, thought that Cervera might be arriving at Cienfuegos at that moment. When the blockade had been established off Cienfuegos smoke as from steamers was seen within the harbor.

Officers on Schley's ships saw lights on shore that were supposed to be signals, on the nights of May 22 and 23. Schley saw them on the 23d. Captain Evans received, before leaving Key West, a memorandum regarding such signals, which were to be made by insurgents in Cuba who wished to communicate with the American ships. Schley testified ("Proceedings," pp. 1348–1349) that he did not receive this memorandum until it was brought by a despatch boat on the 23d. No effort was made to investigate the signal lights that night. On the 24th Captain McCalla, of the *Marblehead*, arrived and asked if such signals had been seen, and said he had arranged for them. He was sent to investigate, and near 4 o'clock of the same day reported that the insurgents said Cervera was not in Cienfuegos.

By the despatch boat that arrived on the 23d Schley had received from Sampson a letter containing a copy of a letter from the Department, dated May 20, as follows: "The report of the Spanish fleet being at Santiago might very well be correct, so the Department strongly advises that you send word to Schley to proceed off Santiago with whole command." Sampson's letter (dated May 21) said: "Spanish squadron probably at Santiago. If you are satisfied that they are not at Cienfuegos, proceed with all despatch, but cautiously, to Santiago de Cuba, and if the enemy is there blockade him."

Schley was satisfied, at 4 o'clock P. M. on the 24th, that

Cervera was not in Cienfuegos. He reported this to the Department, and said he would "move eastward to-morrow." At 7:45 o'clock that night (24th) he moved eastward, having notified the ships to rendezvous at a point twenty-five miles south of Santiago. The collier *Merrimac*, carrying 4,500 tons of coal, went with Schley. Next day the sea was rough for the small craft. The *Eagle* (a converted yacht) took a solid sea over her bow and filled her forward compartment. Schley then slowed down the squadron to a speed that the *Eagle* could make. On the 26th, after the *Eagle* had been pumped out, she was ordered to Jamaica. At 5:30 P. M. that afternoon Schley stopped at a point twenty-two miles south of Santiago.

At midnight on May 20 Captain W. C. Wise, commanding the scout *Yale*, then at Cape Haytien, received a despatch from Washington, saying ("Proceedings," p. 212): "The Spanish squadron arrived on the 19th at Santiago. Proceed off that port. Get in touch with the enemy." It was also said that Schley had been ordered to Santiago "with all possible despatch."

On the way to Santiago the *Yale* fell in with the scout *St. Paul*, Captain C. D. Sigsbee, and took her along. Neither of these ships saw anything of the Spaniards. The scout *Harvard*, Captain C. S. Colton, joined them. She saw nothing. The cruiser *Minneapolis*, Captain T. F. Jewell, arrived on the 23d. She saw nothing. The Spaniards were all far inside at this time. The *Minneapolis* was sent on the 24th ("Proceedings," p. 350) to report to Schley off Cienfuegos, but not finding him there she returned to Santiago, arriving on the 26th. She saw nothing of the Flying Squadron while on the way.

When Schley arrived at a point twenty-two miles south of Santiago his smoke was seen by the cruiser *Minneapolis*, and the scouts *Yale* and *St. Paul*, and all three joined him.

Captain Sigsbee was called to the *Brooklyn*, where he reported: "I have seen absolutely nothing of the Spanish fleet." He also reported that he had captured "very close to the Morro, off Santiago," the British ship *Restormel*, loaded with 2,400 tons of coal. The *Restormel* had left Cardiff after the war began, she had been sent to San Juan, Porto Rico, for orders, she had been sent thence to Curaçoa, where she had arrived two days after Cervera sailed, and she had then been ordered to Santiago. The captains of all three of the scouting vessels have testified that they all believed, when they joined Schley, that Cervera was in Santiago, as the Department's despatch had said.

Captain Sigsbee put a Cuban pilot on the *Brooklyn*, and he told Schley that ships as large as Cervera's could not enter Santiago except under circumstances extraordinarily favorable.

The log of the *Brooklyn* for the 26th shows that the weather was "cloudy and pleasant," and that the "breeze" varied from "light" to "moderate" and back to "gentle."

Before leaving Cienfuegos, Schley had written the Department that he should not be able to remain off Santiago "on account of general short coal supply of squadron, so we will proceed to the vicinity of Nicholas Mole where the water is smooth."

At 7:45 o'clock P. M., on the 26th, two hours and fifteen minutes after reaching a point twenty-two miles south of Santiago, Schley signalled to his squadron: "Destination Key West, *via* south side of Cuba and Yucatan Channel, as soon as collier is ready; speed nine knots."

The *Merrimac's* machinery was out of order, but the *Yale* took her in tow. The fleet steamed westward eighteen miles, stopped at 11:15 P. M. and then drifted until 3:40 in the afternoon of the next day, May 27. While thus drifting, at 9:30 o'clock in the forenoon of May 27

the scout *Harvard* joined the squadron and delivered to Schley the following despatch, which had been addressed to the *Harvard* at St. Nicholas Mole:

"Proceed at once and inform Schley as follows: All Department's information indicates the Spanish division is still at Santiago de Cuba. The Department looks to you to ascertain the fact, and that the enemy, if therein, does not leave without a decisive action."

To this Schley replied ("Proceedings," p. 1827):

Received dispatch of May 26th delivered by *Harvard* off Santiago de Cuba. *Merrimac's* engine is disabled and she is helpless; am obliged to have her towed to Key West. Have been absolutely unable to coal the *Texas, Marblehead, Vixen* and *Brooklyn* from collier, owing to very rough seas and boisterous weather since leaving Key West. *Brooklyn* is the only one in squadron having more than sufficient coal to reach Key West. Impossible to remain off Santiago in present state of coal account of the squadron. Not possible to coal to leeward of Cape Cruz in summer, owing to southwest winds. *Harvard* just reports to me she has only coal enough to reach Jamaica, and she will proceed to Port Royal; also reports only small vessels could coal at Gonaives or Mole, Haiti. *Minneapolis* has only coal enough to reach Key West, and same of *Yale*, which will tow *Merrimac*. It is to be regretted that department's orders cannot be obeyed, earnestly as we have all striven to that end. I am forced to return to Key West, via Yucatan passage, for coal. . . . Will leave *St. Paul* here. Will require 9500 tons of coal at Key West.

The Court of Inquiry, in its report, unanimously wrote as follows under the sub-title of "Facts":

The coal supply of the flying squadron at noon on May 27 was sufficient to have enabled them to steam at 10 knots per hour—the *Brooklyn* for 11¼ days, the *Iowa* for 7½ days, the *Massachusetts* for 10 days, the *Texas* for 6¼ days, the *Marblehead* for 3¼ days, the *Vixen* for 11½ days, or to have remained on blockade duty off Santiago de Cuba—the *Brooklyn* for 26 days, the *Iowa* for 16 days, the *Massachusetts* for 20 days, the *Texas* for 10 days, the *Marblehead*

for 5 days, the *Vixen* for 23 days, and then steam to Gonaives, Haiti, or to Cape Cruz, Cuba, to coal.

At that date the Flying Squadron was accompanied by the collier *Merrimac*, containing 4,350 tons of coal. The amount of coal required to completely fill the coal bunkers of all the vessels of the Flying Squadron on this same date was 2,750 tons.

The conditions of wind, sea and weather from noon on May 26 to June 1 were favorable for taking coal from a collier at sea off Santiago de Cuba.

Having sent the despatch quoted above, Schley, at 3:45 P. M. on the 27th, went on toward Key West, twenty-three miles, and then stopped again and drifted. While drifting at this time the *Texas* went alongside the collier and remained filling her bunkers all night. While she was there, at 10:45 that night, Schley signalled her: "The more coal you take on in this smooth weather the less you will have to take on in Haiti."

After drifting until 1 P. M. on the 28th, Schley returned toward Santiago, and at 6 o'clock that night took a position seven miles south of the entrance of the harbor.

"Commodore Schley made no effort to ascertain whether the Spanish squadron was in the harbor of Santiago; he left said harbor entirely unguarded from 6 P. M. of May 26 to 5 P. M. of May 27, and guarded only by the scout *St. Paul* from 5 P. M. on May 27 until 6 P. M. May 28." ("Facts," unanimously found by Court of Inquiry.)

Schley, in his "Forty-five Years under the Flag," says (p. 278): "The move to the westward at 9:50 P. M. on the night of May 26th was made with the purpose in view of blocking the passage to the westward to bar any effort of the enemy to reach Havana by a dash through the Yucatan passage."

On May 29 the *Colon*, of Cervera's squadron, was seen at anchor 1,200 yards within the entrance to the harbor. She had been there since the 24th, as her log shows.

Others of the ships were seen near her. The four cruisers and two of the destroyers were in the harbor, the third destroyer having gone to San Juan. "No attempt was made by Commodore Schley on May 29 or 30 to capture or destroy these Spanish vessels." ("Facts.")

On May 31 Schley went to the *Massachusetts*. He said to the captain: "Higginson, I am going in with you and the *Iowa* and pot the *Colon* with your big guns. I want to fire deliberately. Admiral Sampson will be here to-morrow morning and I wish to destroy the *Colon*." At 11:10 o'clock he set signals saying: "The *Massachusetts*, *New Orleans* and *Iowa* will go in after dinner to a distance of 7,000 yards and fire at the *Cristobal Colon* with 8, 12, and 13-inch guns. Speed about ten knots."

At 1:30 the three ships went to a range of something more than 7,000 yards (four land miles at least was the range), headed eastward across the harbor and fired at the *Colon* during the interval of from two to four minutes that she was visible from each ship. The shots fell short. The *Colon* and a battery on the hill replied. The *Colon's* shots fell short. One shot from the battery on the hill passed over the *Massachusetts*. In turning to cross back the ships used "a port helm"—they went out to sea still further. Captain Higginson suggested that the turn be made inshore—"with a starboard helm"—in order to reduce the range, but Schley "thought it would be better to go around with a port helm." ("Proceedings," p. 39.) Captain Higginson did not think the land batteries amounted to much. Before the Court of Inquiry Schley testified ("Proceedings," p. 1,375) that he thought the guns were of 6 or 8-inch calibre." He also said: "Their shot did go beyond us. That being developed, I determined, of course, that there was no necessity to have risked—it would have been military folly to have risked—any of the battleships."

In his report to the Department regarding this affair he said the "reconnoissance was intended principally to injure and destroy *Colon*." (See "Proceedings," p. 1,505, "I will stand by that.")

In connection with these statements of fact it seems worth while to note here that the scout *St. Louis* (the big Atlantic liner of that name), Captain C. F. Goodrich, and the tug *Wompatuck*, Lieutenant C. W. Jungen, were off Santiago early in the morning of May 18, and steamed in until "within 1.3 miles of the castle." They were then about 2,600 yards from the hill forts. The *St. Louis* was armed with 6-pounders; the *Wompatuck* had one 3-pounder. Using these guns these two unarmored vessels, with machinery high out of the water, silenced the batteries on the hills and then picked up and cut a cable. The *Wompatuck* was still closer in at one time. (See Append. Rep. Bu. Nav., p. 209.)

CHAPTER XXIX

BATTLE OF SANTIAGO

After receiving Schley's telegram of May 27, saying he should go on to Key West in spite of orders, the Department ordered Sampson to Santiago, where he arrived on June 1. Schley had blockaded the port by cruising slowly to and fro "at an average distance of six or seven miles" ("Facts," in "Proceedings," p. 1,828), with two pickets two miles nearer shore at night. After Sampson arrived the fleet was divided into two squadrons, of which one, called the West Squadron, was under Commodore Schley, while the other, the East, was directly under Admiral Sampson, who also, of course, had supreme command of both. The squadrons were arranged in a curve drawn around the harbor mouth with a radius that did not exceed six miles. At night the whole fleet closed in to a distance of two miles from the entrance. Then two battleships steamed in one mile and stopped there, after which one of them kept the entrance and the channel far beyond well illuminated with her search-lights, while the other kept her guns trained up the channel and the gunners stood with their fingers on the triggers, so to speak, ready to fire on any ship that might appear. Three auxiliaries were then sent in and placed in line across the harbor mouth at a distance of half a mile from land, while three steam launches were kept patrolling to and fro within a quarter of a mile of the beach.

"The whole habit of mind of our Commander-in-chief was to be in close touch with the enemy," wrote Captain Chadwick, of the *New York*.

At 3 o'clock on the morning of June 3 the collier *Merrimac* was sunk in the mouth of the harbor by Naval-Constructor R. P. Hobson, in an effort to close the channel—a brave deed, but not successful. On June 10 the harbor of Guantanamo, forty miles east of Santiago, was occupied as a coaling and repair station for the fleet. The marines, under Colonel R. W. Huntington, had a warm time with the Spanish soldiers, but of course they held on. There was a lot of brave work done along shore during the month of June, but no description of it can be given here because it did not directly influence the result of the campaign.

On June 14 an army of 16,000 men sailed from Tampa, Fla., and on the 22d they began to land at Daiquira, to the eastward of Santiago. As this army (it was under General Shafter) was sure to besiege Santiago, and thus, as Captain-General Blanco pointed out at the time, bring starvation upon Cervera's squadron as well as upon the city, the Spanish authorities were in a quandary as to what should be done with the ships. The ships certainly were not in an efficient state for battle, but to remain was to face destruction in any event, and on July 2 Cervera received definite orders to leave within twelve hours.

At sunrise the next morning the American squadron lay in a semicircle off the port at a distance of from two to four miles. The armored line included the *Indiana*, the *New York*, the *Oregon*, the *Iowa*, the *Texas* and the *Brooklyn*, in the order named, beginning at the east side of the harbor. The auxiliaries *Gloucester* and *Vixen* lay closer in, the *Gloucester* to the east and the *Vixen* to the west side of the harbor entrance.

It was a beautiful morning, but much like other mornings that had passed. The lookout on the flagship had seen nothing to indicate a change of purpose among the enemy in the harbor. In the meantime the admiral had made an engagement to visit the headquarters of the army

on that day, and at 8:50 o'clock the *New York* left the squadron and steamed east under three boilers of steam. Throughout the fleet the Sunday inspection was taken in hand at 9:30.

While the men were lining up for this purpose a lookout on the *Texas* stood with his hand on signal halliards, to which were set signals that would announce the approach of the enemy, and on the *Oregon* and the *Iowa* sailors stood with fingers on the triggers of 6-pounders, ready to announce the enemy's approach by firing a shot. It was in that fashion that watch was kept, and the keen lookouts were rewarded. At 9:31 the sharp bow of the Spanish flagship was seen coming from behind Smith Cay, and at the first glance the lookouts began to bawl:

"The fleet's coming out!" The signals were hoisted on the *Texas* and the guns were fired on the *Oregon* and the *Iowa*. With that the gongs on all the ships called all hands to quarters, and breaking ranks the men ran shouting for joy to gun-breech and stoke-hole. At the same instant the engineers on watch opened wide the throttles, and the American squadron began to close in for battle at close quarters, according to the plan that had been given to each captain in the squadron by Admiral Sampson—an order that said: "If the enemy tries to escape, the ships must close and engage as soon as possible and endeavor to sink his ships or force them to run ashore in the channel."

The fleet was too far out to intercept the Spaniards in the channel. As the Spaniards reached the mouth of the channel they turned westerly, with the *Teresa* in the lead. At this time, and before she had cleared the shoal, found just to the west of the mouth of the channel, she was heading directly at the *Brooklyn*, and the *Brooklyn* was heading in toward her. The *Teresa* opened fire with her forward turret gun at the *Brooklyn* and her broadside at the

other American ships, aiming especially at the *Indiana*. All the American ships were closing in with growing speed and all returned the fire with enthusiasm. The Spanish shot all flew wild at this time, but almost from the first round the Americans saw that they were striking home. But because they were using the old brown powder, a cloud of smoke soon arose around them, which made aiming difficult and navigation dangerous.

As the *Brooklyn* steamed in Commodore Schley signalled "close in" and about the same time told his captain (Cook) to keep out of torpedo range of the Spaniards. Torpedo range at that time was about 1,000 yards.

Before coming out the captain of the *Teresa* had determined to ram the *Brooklyn*, but as soon as he had cleared the shoal at the mouth of the channel he changed his mind and turned still further to the west in a determined effort to get away from the American fleet. This left the *Vizcaya*, the next Spanish ship in the line, heading directly at the *Brooklyn*. Schley had already thought that the *Teresa* would try to ram the *Brooklyn*, and had said to Cook, "Cook, look out; they are going to ram you." And now that the *Vizcaya* was seen closing in on the *Teresa's* former course, both Schley and Cook thought of torpedoes, and Cook, under the general order he had received from Schley on that subject, ordered the *Brooklyn's* helm put hard aport and she turned away from the enemy, out to sea, and then to the west in a course parallel with that taken by the flying Spaniards. The *Brooklyn* was flying the signal "Follow the flag," as she turned away from the enemy.

The *Brooklyn* made no effort to use either her torpedoes or her ram. "When the *Brooklyn's* helm was put hard aport, the *Teresa* was 1,400 yards to the eastward of north of the *Brooklyn*, the *Vizcaya* was to the eastward of the *Teresa* and the *Colon* to the eastward of the *Vizcaya*.

When the *Brooklyn* completed the turn and was heading to the westward the *Vizcaya* and the *Colon* were about 2,400 yards to the northward and westward of the *Brooklyn*. ("Facts," found by the Court, p. 1,829.)

In the meantime the other ships of the fleet had been closing in and firing as rapidly as possible. Chief-Engineer Milligan of the *Oregon* had kept up steam so well that she was able to cross astern of the *Iowa* and plough up between the *Iowa* and the *Texas* in chase of the Spaniards as they fled to the westward. Both the *Iowa* and *Texas* were obscured by the smoke for a time, but as the *Oregon* drew in between them the *Texas* suddenly came into view so close aboard to port that a collision seemed impending. Captain Clark instantly turned to the starboard only to find himself almost on top of the *Iowa*.

When the *Brooklyn* turned away from the Spaniards she ran in so close on the *Texas* ("so near that it took away our breath," wrote Captain Philip) that Captain Philip felt obliged to stop and then back his engines to keep out of the way. Captain Evans estimated that the *Brooklyn* crossed the bow of the *Texas* at a distance of 100 yards, while Lieutenant Heilner of the *Texas* estimated the distance at 150 yards.

Schley explained that to have turned with a starboard helm instead of the port "would have carried us into a dangerous proximity to the torpedo attack, the broadside torpedo attack, of the enemy's vessels." ("Proccedings," p. 1,398.) In his autobiography he says that turning away from the enemy "was the proper military move . . . and saved the day beyond a doubt."

When the *Brooklyn* was out of the way the three ships, that had been apparently so near in collision on account of her turn, were able to keep on closing in. As they drew near their fire became more deadly, and within fifteen minutes the *Teresa* was seen "wabbling like a

wounded bird." Smoke was pouring from ports and hatches. She was on fire as well as in danger of sinking and, turning from her course, she ran ashore about six miles west of the harbor.

Seeing the *Teresa* was done for, the fleet concentrated their fire on the *Oquendo*, the last of the squadron, because she was nearest, and she, too, soon turned as the *Teresa* had done, leaving the *Vizcaya* and the *Colon* to continue the wild flight. The *Vizcaya* was already badly wounded, however, and the pounding of the *Brooklyn*, the *Texas* and the *Oregon*, which were well to westward of the other American ships, drove her to the rocks at Asseraderos, fifteen or sixteen miles from the harbor.

The *Colon*, by steaming closer to the shore, had escaped the fire and was now doing everything possible to get away. The fighting was ended; it was now a case of speed alone.

In the meantime the two destroyers, the *Pluton* and the *Furor*, had followed out astern of the Spanish cruisers. They found Wainwright, of the converted yacht *Gloucester*, waiting for them. Wainwright had cleared his little ship for action with the others and, steaming in, he had fired at the big Spaniards with his 6-pounder and 3-pounder battery. Then he thought of the destroyers, and slowing down, he headed in, while Engineer G. W. McElroy bottled up steam. Wainwright was from the *Maine*, and his day had come. The Spanish destroyers carried two 14-pounders, two 6-pounders and two 1-pounders each, and there were two of them, but as soon as they appeared Wainwright drove the *Gloucester* into the mouth of the harbor under the fire of the land batteries as well as of the enemy's guns afloat to meet them "at short range." The *Pluton* was coming at full speed, but under Wainwright's fire she first slowed down and then sought safety for her crew by a flight to the rocks alongshore; for she was sinking rapidly. The *Furor* turned as if with better

pluck to run at the *Gloucester*, but it was soon seen that she was turning merely because she was no longer under control—she was in the death flurry—and when she had completed one circle she began to go down stern first. Hastening to the rescue Wainwright secured a dozen of her crew, and then, after an explosion somewhere in the bow, she went down speedily.

When in doubt about the conduct of an American naval officer in battle let the reader ask what would John Paul Jones, or Nicholas Biddle, or William B. Cushing, or G. U. Morris, or David Glasgow Farragut, or Richard Wainwright have done under the circumstances. Their conduct needed no explanation—there is none to dispute that they have set the pace for all American naval officers. Try all others by their standard.

As the *Colon* fled the *Brooklyn* and the *Oregon* held on in chase with the slower *Texas* following astern of them. Milligan went into the *Oregon's* stoke-hole, where the men who shovelled coal were gasping for breath but keeping the fires blazing until a speed of perhaps eighteen knots was reached. It was then that the impatient younger officers on deck asked Captain Clark to let them try a shot. Clark consented, and Milligan, black with coal, came up on deck to thank the captain and say that his men were fainting below, but if they could hear a shot, now and then, they could live through and keep her going.

The first shot fell short, but another passed over and fell ahead of the *Colon*. With that shot hope fled from the Spanish ship, and hauling down her flag she turned ashore, grounding at the mouth of the Tarquino River, forty-three miles from Santiago.

The American squadron lost one man killed and one wounded. Both were on the *Brooklyn*. She was for twenty minutes under the fire of perhaps all the four Spanish ships, and yet lost no more. The Spanish squad-

ron lost at least 350 killed and 160 wounded, while seventy officers and 1,600 men were taken prisoners. Superior speed carried our ships within range and superior gunnery, not superior armor, protected our men and destroyed the enemy.

As Farragut said, "The best protection against the enemy's fire is a well-directed fire from our own guns."

Neither of the Spanish ships was saved, though at least two of them might have been by prompt effort, but the Spanish naval power was wiped out. The Spanish authorities did, indeed, start a small squadron eastward as a threat to Dewey at Manila, but it was not an effective squadron, and a threat of a Yankee squadron on the Spanish coast stopped it. The destruction of Cervera's squadron decided the war.

Nevertheless, it is useful to point out, that when the hulls of the wrecked Spanish ships had been examined it was found that out of more than 8,000 shots fired at them, only 123 struck home. To reach 123 hits the holes made by 6-pounders in the smokestacks were counted. It was to that degree of excellence that we trained our gunners before the War with Spain!

The *New York*, at the time the Spaniards appeared, was well on her way toward Siboney. On hearing the firing she was turned back at full speed, and she made such good headway that if by accident the *Brooklyn* and the *Oregon* had broken down she would have overhauled the *Colon* eventually. The *Texas* was also gaining on the *Colon*. The destruction of the *Colon* did not depend on any one ship of the fleet. At the time the *Gloucester* sank the destroyers, and even when the fleet opened fire, the *New York* was nearer the *Indiana* than the *Brooklyn* was. ("Proceedings," p. 1,841.) It was claimed for Admiral Sampson that because of the position of the *New York* during the heavy firing "the absolute command and the

full responsibility" were his—that a failure to destroy the fleet would have been charged to him. The Court of Claims, when the question of prize money came before it, decided that Sampson was in command at the battle.

To complete the record the following is the Opinion of the Court of Inquiry:

Commodore Schley, in command of the Flying Squadron, should have proceeded with utmost despatch off Cienfuegos and should have maintained a close blockade of that port.

He should have endeavored on May 23, at Cienfuegos, to obtain information regarding the Spanish squadron by communicating with the insurgents at the place designated in the memorandum delivered to him at 8.15 A.M. of that date.

He should have proceeded from Cienfuegos to Santiago de Cuba with all despatch, and should have disposed his vessels with a view of intercepting the enemy in any attempt to pass the Flying Squadron.

He should not have delayed the squadron for the *Eagle*.

He should not have made the retrograde turn westward with his squadron. He should have promptly obeyed the Navy Department's order of May 25.

He should have endeavored to capture or destroy the Spanish vessels at anchor near the entrance of Santiago Harbor on May 29 and 30.

He did not do his utmost with the force under his command to capture or destroy the *Colon* and other vessels of the enemy which he attacked on May 31.

By commencing the engagement on July 3 with the port battery and turning the *Brooklyn* around with port helm, Commodore Schley caused her to lose distance and position with the Spanish vessels. The turn was made toward the *Texas* and caused that vessel to stop and to back her engines to avoid possible collision.

Admiral Schley did injustice to Commander A. C. Hodgson in publishing only a portion of the correspondence which passed between them.

Commodore Schley's conduct in connection with the events of the Santiago campaign prior to June 1, 1898, was characterized by vacillation, dilatoriness and lack of enterprise.

His official reports regarding the coal supply and the coaling facilities of the Flying Squadron were inaccurate and misleading.

His conduct during the battle of July 3 was self-possessed, and he encouraged, in his own person, his subordinate officers and men to fight courageously.

GEORGE DEWEY, Admiral U. S. N., *President,*
SAM. C. LEMLY, Judge Advocate-General, *Judge Advocate.*

After signing the above Admiral Dewey wrote the following personal opinion:

In the opinion of the undersigned the passage from Key West to Cienfuegos was made by the Flying Squadron with all possible despatch, Commodore Schley having in view the importance of arriving off Cienfuegos with as much coal as possible in the ships' bunkers.

The blockade of Cienfuegos was effective.

Commodore Schley, in permitting the *Adula* to enter the port of Cienfuegos, expected to obtain information concerning the Spanish squadron from her when she came out.

The passage from Cienfuegos to a point about 22 miles south of Santiago was made with as much despatch as was possible while keeping the squadron a unit.

The blockade of Santiago was effective.

Commodore Schley was the senior officer of our squadron off Santiago when the Spanish squadron attempted to escape on the morning of July 3, 1898. He was in absolute command, and is entitled to the credit due to such commanding officer for the glorious victory which resulted in the total destruction of the Spanish ships.

GEORGE DEWEY, Admiral U.S.N., *President,*
SAM. C. LEMLY, Judge Advocate-General, *Judge Advocate.*

It is important to note that the question of who was senior officer at the battle of Santiago was not at any time before the Court of Inquiry. Testimony looking to a consideration of that question was rigorously excluded. Moreover, when counsel for Admiral Sampson appealed for protection for their client, or for permission to appear and defend his rights, the Court, with Admiral Dewey consenting, refused to let them appear, and Dewey wrote to them saying that "Admiral Sampson is not an interested

party." ("Proceedings," p. 1,843.) When a letter was sent by the writer to Admiral Dewey asking why he had thus expressed an opinion against the claims of a man whom he had refused to hear, no answer was received.

CHAPTER XXX

TEN YEARS OF NAVAL DEVELOPMENT

The battle of Santiago was decisive. Spain's navy as a weapon of offence was annihilated. That she had some ships left at home for coast defence, and that her home ports were on the far side of the broad Atlantic from her enemy was a matter of no importance in connection with the result of the war. Her forces in Cuba were hemmed in and were compelled to surrender. The navy had part in the occupation of Porto Rico and the Philippines, but of the work done there nothing need be said here.

As a result of the war with Spain we found ourselves in possession of the Philippine Islands and Porto Rico. It has been determined that we shall retain the government of these islands until the people thereof are fully capable of governing themselves, and the chances are that as fast as they reach that state of enlightenment they will rejoice that they live under the flag that first gave them opportunity for development. These islands we must protect. For many years we have had the Monroe Doctrine to uphold. No foreign nation shall obtain control of another foot of soil on either of the Americas. And in defence of this doctrine we are as likely to be obliged to send a squadron to protect Rio Grande do Sul in southern Brazil as to any other part of the continent. We are building the Panama Canal and we shall have to defend that as well as the new-made republic of Panama. We have determined that our merchants shall not be shut out of such

markets as China and other similar powers afford by unfair "spheres of influence."

In view of the obligations that we have assumed as a world Power the old-time talk about the advantages of our situation with an ocean dividing us from the other great Powers of the world, and of needing coast-defence ships only, is puerile.

When we had no navy worth mention before the War of 1812 we suffered from aggressions that drove us to war. When our navy was strong after that war even the slaver pirates that carried our flag on the coast of Africa were unmolested by foreign warships. When, at about the year 1848, our navy was again weak, aggressions were begun once more, but the building of the *Merrimac* and the *Hartford*, and the casting of the Dahlgren gun saved us from the horrors of a foreign war. During the Civil War we were saved from intervention and foreign aggression solely by the strength of the navy. Eight years after the Civil War our citizens were murdered in Cuba. the flag was outraged, and the whole nation humiliated because our navy had been allowed to dwindle and all but die. When, in 1893, the territory of Venezuela was threatened the mere fact that we were building and had facilities for continuing to build a new navy, made the aggressor willing to leave its dispute with the little South American republic to a just tribunal. After Japan's war with China the Powers of Europe gathered around the little brown "heathen" and robbed him of the fruits of his victory. His navy was then weak. After the war with Russia the whole world gathered to applaud the little brown giant. His navy was strong. Because of the strength of her navy Japan will have peace hereafter, as long as she wants it. In the days when we had no navy the British kept well-appointed squadrons and depots of supplies at Halifax, Bermuda and Jamaica; after we had the homogeneous squadron of

five *Louisianas* well in hand these British naval stations were abandoned as no longer necessary—because there was no longer any probability of war. The battleship is the modern emblem of peace.

How we have built warships since the war with Spain can be told in brief space. Although we had no ships better than the *Oregon* for that war, we had other ships on the stocks when the war began. There was the *Kearsarge* class, carrying four 13-inch guns in turrets, four 8-inch guns in smaller turrets placed on the large ones and fourteen 5-inch guns in broadside. The superimposed turrets have been criticised and praised, but without expressing any opinion on the merits of this feature, it may be said that it was an American design and it was therefore worth trying if only on the theory that the man is of more importance than the ship. We can have first quality in nothing while we follow foreign devices. In building the *Alabama*, authorized in 1896, with her four 13-inch and twelve 6-inch guns, and again in designing the *Maine* class (1898), our naval constructors went back to the old idea that it would pay to let the foreigners do the experimenting for us. Originality among American designers was discouraged. It is interesting to note, however, that while the *Maine* class ships were called "sea-going, *coastline* battleships," in deference to the ancient American idea that the only American way of conducting war was to invite the enemy to come to our coasts to do the fighting, the ordinary coal supply was made double that of the *Kearsarge* class designed before our war with Spain. Campaigns on the coast of Cuba and in the Philippines had not been in vain.

In 1899 we returned to the *Oregon* design and brought out the *Virginia* class with four 12-inch, eight 8-inch and twelve 6-inch guns. These ships were beyond question up to date; they were American and they were fit to meet

the best in the world. It was not until 1902, however, that we took a decided step forward. In that year the ordnance bureau brought out a 7-inch gun for broadside batteries, and the *Louisiana* and *Connecticut* were armed with four 12-inch, eight 8-inch and twelve 7-inch guns, besides twenty most excellent 3-inch guns, a size that had been developed because of the effectiveness of our 6-pounders in the war with Spain. These ships were the *Constitutions* of the modern navy, and we have five of them.

Of course, European nations soon laid down ships more powerful. England built the *Lord Nelson* class, carrying four 12-inch guns in turrets and ten 9.2-inch guns in broadside, the smaller gun being an armor-piercer at long range. Yet, in the meantime, a still more remarkable step forward was at hand and *it was a step based on the evolution or development of the man behind the gun.*

A comparison will tell the story of this development. In our war with Spain less than three per cent. of the shots fired from our ships hit the enemy. Under the system of training adopted after the war, especially after Theodore Roosevelt became President (a system that was also adopted in foreign navies), the gunners became so expert that the trophy ship of the American navy at this writing (1907) has a record of 75.782 per cent. of hits with all guns at target practice. Through skill acquired and the improvement of the mechanism, the 12-inch gun can now be fired twice in a minute with much more accuracy than was obtained when it was possible to fire it but once in five minutes. At long ranges it has been found that the 12-inch gun is more accurate than guns of small calibre; the trajectory of the big gun is the smaller. Now small guns were mounted because of the supposed greater accuracy with which they could be fired. It followed, therefore, that when twelve hits could be made in twelve successive

shots from the 12-inch gun—a record actually made in our navy—there was no longer any need for the 7-inch or 8-inch guns on our ships.

It was in England, however, that the logical conclusion here reached was first adopted; for the British had made splendid progress in target work also. The *Dreadnaught*, the first ship to mount 12-inch guns only, displaces over 18,000 tons, she carries ten 12-inch guns, and she makes a speed of twenty-one knots. She was launched on February 10, 1905. It is worth noting, in passing, that the tone of Continental papers had been noticeably unfriendly just before she was brought out, and that that tone was promptly changed after she was fully described in the newspapers.

The American advance at that time was less. Congress had authorized two ships of 16,000 tons. They were designed to carry eight 12-inch guns, mounted in four turrets on the keel line, with the interior turrets built high enough to shoot over the others. These ships have an end-on fire of four guns. The *Dreadnaught* has an end-on fire of six guns, two of her turrets being on the rail. Our broadside of eight guns is as good as hers, but our speed is only 18½ knots. Moreover, as our hulls are small, they could not stand as much pounding as she could.

As the other naval Powers were laying down *Dreadnaughts*, so to speak, the United States was compelled to take the same step forward. We have in hand (1907) two ships of 20,000 tons displacement that will carry ten 12-inch guns in turrets on the keel line, so arranged that an end-on fire of four guns can be had, with a broadside of the whole ten. A battery of 5-inch guns is provided for use against torpedo boats. In speed they will equal the best in Europe and their armor will be thicker than any other of their date. We did not evolve the class—partisan criticism makes our designers hesitate long before

attempting anything untried—but these new ships will be able to hold up the flag at Sandy Hook, or at Panama, or in the Philippines.

In 1898 our 12-inch guns fired a shot weighing 850 pounds with a muzzle velocity of 2,100 foot-seconds and a striking energy of 25,985 foot-tons. Our present 12-inch guns have not been described officially, but it is known that they fire a shot of 850 pounds with a muzzle velocity of at least 2,800 foot-seconds and the muzzle energy is therefore not less than 46,246 foot-tons.

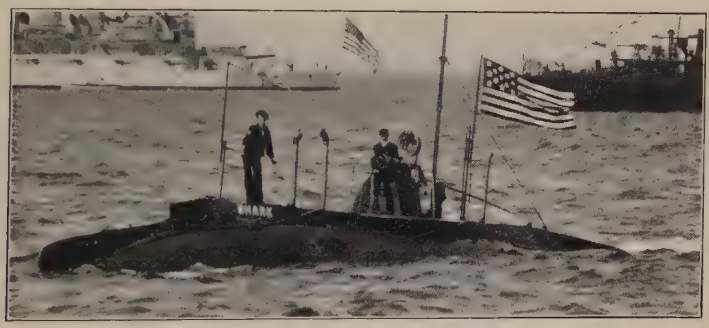
In armored cruisers we advanced from the *Brooklyn* to the *North Carolina*. While the *Brooklyn* displaces 10,068 tons our latest of the type, the *North Carolina*, displaces 15,981 tons. The old ship carried eight 8-inch guns of the old type, and twelve 5-inch guns in broadside. Her best small guns were 6-pounders, of which she carried twelve. The new ship carries four modern 10-inch guns, sixteen 6-inch and twenty-two 3-inch. Both are twenty-two-knot ships. The latest British cruiser carries eight 12-inch guns and makes a speed of twenty-three knots.

A new type of ship is the scout, of which we have three in hand. They displace 3,750 tons, make twenty-four knots speed and carry two 5-inch and six 3-inch guns.

In the evolution of the engine England has definitely adopted the steam turbine for all kinds of ships. We have fitted one of our scouts with old-style engines and the other two with turbines of different makes. One battleship of the all-big-gun type is to have reciprocating engines and the other turbines. The marine engineers of the most enterprising sort have for some time foretold that gas engines would supersede all kinds of steam engines, but no provision has been made for developing this improvement for use in the American navy.

We have been behind the world in submarines until recently when Congress provided $3,000,000 for these

A TORPEDO BOAT DESTROYER UNDER WAY.



From a photograph, copyright 1906, by N. W. Penfield.

THE SUBMARINE, *SHARK*.

THE *FULTON*.

HOLLAND TYPE OF SUBMARINE BOAT, USING HER GASOLINE ENGINE AS PROPELLING POWER.

most fearsome and efficient harbor defenders. We have left the evolution of this class of defenders to private builders, while England has kept a crew of naval experts at that kind of work. The men who are evolving England's type of submarines will also handle them in war time. At the same time England buys all improvements made by civilians.

According to Brassey's Naval Annual for 1907—the standard authority—the American navy ranks second in the world's fleets in her ships and guns. She is second in her capacity for building warships. In the skill of gun pointers England and America are in close rivalry for the lead, with the Americans a trifle ahead at present. Our naval officers command the confidence of the nation. Yet the writer ventures to repeat what he has written elsewhere, that there is one thing we might do for the improvement at once of the navy and the whole nation—we might make the naval academy free to all boys who could pass the examination, and who would serve in the navy, beginning before the mast, as need required, and remaining a reasonable number of years. Chimerical as it may seem to those who have not given the matter serious thought, we might man our ships with graduates of the naval academy. By retaining the present course of study, with such improvements as became necessary, we should have crews of a grade never dreamed of before. In leaving the service, as many who grew tired of waiting for promotion would do when their terms of service had expired, these young men would carry with them an experience and a training that would make them foremost citizens, and we should have in them a naval reserve worthy of the name. A chief function of government is the education of the young—it is especially the chief function of a republican form of government. A time ought to come, and so it will come, when every man who wears the

uniform of the American navy will be thoroughly well-educated.

In the War of the Revolution we gained opportunity to set up a republican form of government as an example to the world. The War of 1812 made firm the foundations of the nation, taught the people something better than "counting their interest more than their honor," and elevated the standards of international law. The Civil War wiped away the infinite disgrace of human slavery and welded a conglomerate of states into a nation. The War with Spain—the least selfish of all our wars—brought order to a people perishing through anarchy. What work the navy did in these wars has been told herein. Let the facts speak. As we have had war or dastardly submission to wrong when our navy was weak, and peace when our navy was strong, so in future shall we have peace, or war and humiliation, according as we build or neglect our guns afloat.

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